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December 11, 1987 / 43rd year of publication / No. 2097

Charismatics lead racial integration in South Africa

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO, Ont. — Explosive growth of the charismatic movement and growth of integrated charismatic churches in South Africa may be a key development toward racial peace in that country, suggests Dr. Karla Poewe, anthropology professor at the University of Lethbridge, Alberta, in an article in *Alberta Report* written by Virginia Byfield.

Almost half of the black population and 30 per cent of the whites are involved in the charismatic movement, says Dr. Poewe after returning from a research trip to her native country with her husband, Dr. Irving Hexham, professor of Religious Studies at the University of Calgary. Hexham's doctoral thesis entitled *Totalitarian Calvinism*, published by Edwin Mellen Press, is a study of Africaner theology.

Dr. Poewe interviewed 40 ministers of new integrated charismatic churches, including Africaners, English and Indians. All but five of the ministers had not studied for the ministry but came to it at the height of careers in other fields. They all believed that they had been called by God to reach all their fellow citizens of every race and colour. Some of their congregations have more than 50 per cent non-white membership, and black leadership in the churches is growing.

Integration of churches is difficult because of the Group Areas Act which requires racially segregrated housing. One church meets one week in white Johannesburg and the next week in black Soweto. A church in Johannesburg has regular attendance of 5,000, and one in Pretoria 3,000. The emphasis in the churches is not primarily racial or ideological but on the human need for God and the power of the Holy Spirit to bring reconciliation and healing.

Professors Poewe and Hexham were favourably impressed with changes they saw in the direction of breaking down rigid apartheid since their last visit. Some kinds of constructive change are taking place, even though this news does not get much media attention.

As racial tensions continue to rise in South Africa and as external pressures on its government increase, people within the country grow more fearful of violence, and some call for violence as the only possible way of gaining relief from oppressive racism. But a new and unexpected sign of peace may be the large-scale turn to the Holy Spirit by South Africans of all races who pray for peace and a fellowship of love across all racial barriers.

Thinkbit

Re biblicism:

"The devil's last method is to undo by overdoing, and thus destroy the authority of the Bible by overmagnifying it."

Richard Baxter

Women's clinics for more than abortion referral

Marian Van Til

TORONTO, Ont. — Ontario Minister of Health Elinor Caplan announced on Dec. 1 that the province will establish a women's health centre in Toronto, one of 12 such centres to be opened across Ontario.

The Toronto centre, to be housed at Women's College Hospital, will provide a wide range of education, counselling and referral services. Services will consist of: physical examinations, family planning and birth control information, infertility counselling, information on sexually transmitted diseases, pre-menstrual syndrome and menopause education and support, pregnancy diagnoses and services which will include support for single mothers, counselling on alternatives to abortion and referral for women who seek "therapeutic abortions."

This centre will become the "lead centre," making it "the health education resource centre for the province, providing written and audio-visual information on reproductive health," according to Caplan. Caplan also announced that her ministry is reviewing a proposal to set up 15 hospital-affiliated birthing centres across the province and reported that the recently established Women's Health Bureau is now functioning and "promoting greater awareness of women's health issues."

The centre, to be headquartered at Women's College Hospital, will work with four other Toronto hospitals (Toronto General, Toronto Western, Mt. Sinai, and Wellesley). It is being established with $1.5 million in ministry funding and will have a staff of 45, made up of doctors, nurses, social workers, psychologists, health educators, ultra sound technicians and support staff. Women will be able to seek help from the centre directly or upon referral from doctors, counsellors, or community agencies. The health ministry expects that 75 per cent of the women using the centre will do so for reasons *not* related to abortion.

Ontario Minister of Health Elinor Caplan

Careful optimism

Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) Public Affairs Director Gerald Vandezande is cautiously optimistic about the inclusion of counselling which presents alternatives to abortion, and the other support services. "This *could* be a decent move," he says. "Clearly this, like all government statements, should be read with a critical eye. But one must be open to the possibility of a slight change in [the government's] position. I would not want to minimize it."

Vandezande is anxious to find out from which perspective(s) the counselling — including the abortion alternative counselling — will be done, or if there will be a bias against pro-life stances. He wants the government to clarify whether "people with genuine pro-life perspectives will be able to participate in the centre, or is this just window dressing?"

He thinks that, based on CPJ's behind-the-scenes contacts, the government may very well be open to hiring Christians and other counsellors and health care workers with pro-life views. That would truly allow "equal access," a phrase "pro-choice" people use frequently.

Such plurality would allow women who come to the centre thinking abortion is their only option to a

Continued on page 3 ...

Christian party is on the way

Bert Witvoet

HAMILTON, Ont. — It was a soul-cleansing experience for most of the 500 delegates who took part in a founding convention that tried to spell out a Christian position on many burning political issues.

Several delegates indicated that it was the moral resolutions that were most important to them — resolutions that said that they were pro-God, pro-country, pro-family, pro-free-enterprise and pro-life.

Besides debating and voting on 300 resolutions, the convention elected Ed VanWoudenberg as leader and Bill Stilwell as President of the party. Both men are from Surrey, B.C., where the CHP had its beginnings.

There was fellowship, singing and praying. There was an earnest desire to have Canada return to its Christian heritage. There was optimism about future success, as one delegate from the Yukon was referred to as the future member of parliament from the Yukon.

(For a more complete coverage of the convention see pages 10 and 11)

Photo: Bert Witvoet

With a colourful backdrop of the map of Canada and Canadian and provincial flags facing them, delegates were reminded of the scope of the task before them — setting policies for a nation under God, who "shall have dominion from sea to sea."

In this issue:

Missionary Aviation Fellowship operates a fleet of planes throughout the world, reports Paul DeGroot p.8
Finding your way through economic questions as Christians is not easy, says Dean McRae p.9
Coverage of the founding convention of the Christian Heritage Party pp.10,11
Dutch pages pp.18,19

News

Does *glasnost* spell religious freedom?

Robert VanderVennen

There have been some recent improvements in Soviet dealings with Christians and with churches, but does this mean genuine reform in the freedom to exercise religious faith in Russia? asks Keston College, a British group that monitors religious freedom in communist countries.

They suggest an attitude of caution, of wary hopefulness. There is no reason to think that the system has changed, nor basic attitudes toward religion and its exercise. The most that can be hoped is that the present posture of *glasnost* (literally: "publicity") means a loosening of oppression and discrimination against Christians and a willingness to co-exist with expressions of religious faith.

Konstantin Kharchev, Chairman of the Soviet Council for Religious Affairs, was quoted as saying in Washington on Aug. 31 that all "prisoners of faith" in the Soviet Union will be released by November 1987. One week earlier he said in a speech in New York that "there are no prisoners of conscience" in Russia, that all so-called religious prisoners are, in fact, criminals. Indeed Christians are often charged with "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda," which is technically a violation of the law. "*Glasnost* will not affect criminals," said Kharchev.

Keston College says that as of Aug. 21 they knew of 289 believers imprisoned in the Soviet Union for religious activity or for human rights activity motivated by religious faith. This compares with a figure of more than 450 held two years ago.

Glasnost has not to date resulted in any change in the various civil and criminal laws on religion. Current law makes it easy for officials to close churches, and very difficult to open new ones, in spite of the extreme shortage of churches. "The same law limits the activities of religious associations to religious worship and excludes charitable or educational work, especially when it is directed at young people," says Keston College.

Gorbachev has said that the aim of *glasnost* is to make the present system in the USSR more efficient, not to change it. It is a welcome change to have less oppression and discrimination in the area of religious practice. But by current law it would be very simple to send recently-released believers back to prison camps without explanation.

The Soviet system needs to change. Without change in existing laws and an end to discrimination against believers in many areas of social life, including the right to bring up their children as believers, Russian Christians simply do not have freedom of conscience.

Keston College concludes: "All this contributes to making this an exciting and important time for believers in the Soviet Union .... Religious communities in the USSR face continued problems; believers remain in the Gulag. They still need a voice."

Children are targets of war

Robert VanderVennen

Soviet troops pull out of an Afghan village and leave scattered behind them a variety of brightly coloured toys. A 14-year-old boy picks up a red plastic truck. It explodes in his hand.

The war in Afghanistan, which has already taken a million civilian lives, is also aimed at children, says John Hughes in *The Christian Science Monitor,* citing a report by the Center on War and the Child, a U.S.-based foundation. It is part of an effort of intimidation and terror on the part of the Russians. Their struggle for the loyalty of Afghan children has also led them to transport thousands of Afghan children, age 6-9, to Russia for up to 10 years of study so they can be a cadre capable of leading a future communist Afghanistan.

The report says that the Afghan resistance movement is not blameless because it is guilty of indoctrination of children. In crowded refugee schools Afghan children are taught in arithmetic that two dead Russians plus two dead Russians make four dead Russians killed by the mujahideen.

The abuse of children in Afghanistan is meeting with very little condemnation from the rest of the world.

The column "Canadian Church Scene" by Jacob Kuntz will be suspended for a while. Rev. Kuntz has been seriously ill with a rare virus that has caused infection throughout the body. He has had an operation and is recuperating in a London hospital. We wish our brother a full recovery from this sudden and painful attack on his health. **BW**

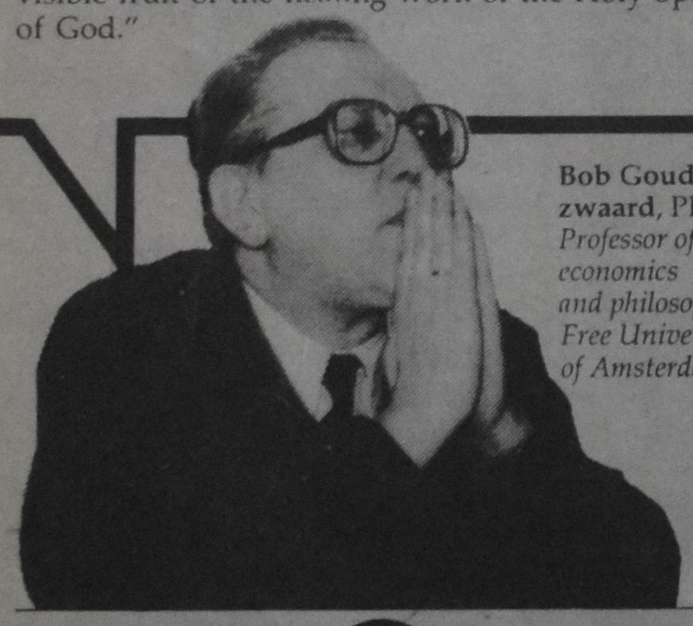
Spirit!

"Neither confession nor name will make a college or university Christian.

"But spirit will!

"In my many travels all over the world I have never experienced a more natural integration of true spirit and genuine learning than at the Institute for Christian Studies. The union of Christian learning with the fostering of community between teachers and students is unique at ICS. Here working, thinking, and living communally really come together.

"I'm proud to be a Fellow of the Institute and I think it can only be gain for the world-wide Christian community if this work were to continue. It will be a great contribution if students continue to come here to be nourished in this spiritual climate. In today's turbulent world, I experience ICS as a visible fruit of the healing work of the Holy Spirit of God."



Bob Goudzwaard, Ph.D.
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BETWEEN THE LINES

Socio-political comment by Gus Polman, Richard Vanderkloet, William van Geest, Clarence Joldersma

Children's choice at play

As television advertising for children recently reached its peak, the Supreme Court of Canada had to decide whether a Quebec law, prohibiting advertising directed at children younger than 13, violates constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.

The Quebec government supports sections (previously struck down) from its Consumer Protection Act and claims companies selling toys or cereals should address their advertising to parents, rather than to "those most vulnerable to the manipulation and seduction" of advertisements. Toronto-based Irwin Toy Ltd. says the law violates its rights to commercial free speech. Parents and children are somewhere between or out shopping.

The law prevents advertisers in Quebec from buying television space to sell children's products on any show where children comprise more than 15 per cent of the audience. Quebec argues in its appeal that commercial speech is not protected by the freedom-of-expression guarantees in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms.* (Parents of children at an age most vulnerable to the manipulation and seduction of advertisements might well note that the charter's fundamental freedoms section being debated also proclaims all citizens have freedom of thought.)

Parents attempting to help children develop critical reflection, evaluation and decision-making life skills have good cause for concern about the products being aimed at their children. A host of talking toys and plastic battalions are speaking to and stepping into Canadian living rooms, carefully designed and marshalled by advertising experts and other ministers of consumerism. The ads represent diverse interests. Care Bears, Smurfs and muscle-bound warriors are joined by Heroes of the Kingdom and Born-Again Bunnies. Woe to us — the appeal of the militaristic remains: *Toy and Hobby World* magazine still ranks G.I. Joe at the top of its annual "Toy Hit Parade," the industry's best-seller list.

Trick camera angles

Alluring ad activity led to court actions in recent years against Mattel and others for deceptive advertising in which trick camera angles and other distorted audio-visual methods were used to make toys look larger, stronger or more substantial than they really were. In the current Quebec case, the provincial consumer protection office's lawyer speaks for parents in saying they would not tolerate a fast-talking toy salesman demanding living room space alone with the children of the house. Why should television commercials be able to do essentially that?

Parents sensitive to the eventual disappointments instant gratification affords their children can do more, however, than stop delivering them over to advertisers via the electronic babysitter. Parents can try to help their children develop an awareness of manipulation techniques so that they will not be deprived of real choices. Parents who help their children at an early age to question the worth of products and to plan their buying carefully, contribute to a better world in which informed and caring people make conscious choices, free of consumerism.

With Christmas here and likely many months before the Supreme Court can speak its peace, parents can pray, watch and work with interest. People on the watch may also learn from the mother who looked on her boy gazing at a wagon in a storefront window and said, "You don't have to buy it, son, you can make it."

Gus Polman is development education co-ordinator for the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta, Edmonton.

Women's clinics for more than abortion referral

... continued from page 1.

pregnancy they feel unable to cope with, to meet compassionate counsellors who will provide them with alternative options and support.

Golden opportunity

"Most people in pro-life [movements] probably don't want to be a part of this. I think that's a mistake," asserts Vandezande. He recognizes that pro-life groups may see *any* kind of association with the centre as being in league with the devil. (Some press reports since Dec. 1 have made the referral centre sound like merely a streamlined abortion referral service, a distortion of Caplan's announcement.)

However, Vandezande feels that such a reflex reaction may cause Christians to miss a golden opportunity to present to women in trouble, life-affirming alternatives.

He points out that the establishment of women's health centres as proposed would likely allow for monitoring of the number of abortions and abortion practices in a way which is not possible now. Currently, hospitals that perform abortions have several-member committees which decide whether a woman is indeed requesting a "therapeutic" abortion. In reality, such committees are often rubber-stamp groups, allowing an abortion to anyone who asks.

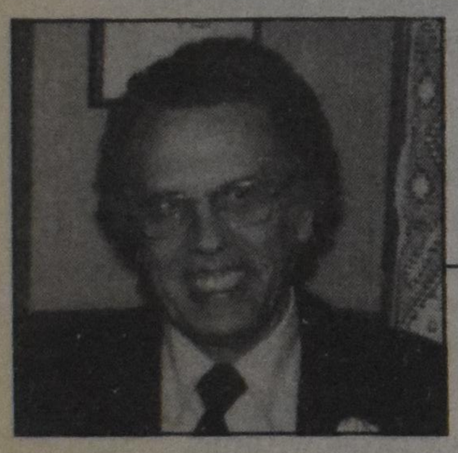
The women's health centres referral committees would remove that procedure from the hospitals. That being the case, Vandezande says, "I would hope it would be easier to hold them accountable. The way it is now, we have no clear picture of what's happening in the hospitals."

Opposition not enough

Vandezande points out that the abortion issue is not simply a principial issue "out there." Secular women who choose careers over pregnancy at a given point are far from the only women who consider abortions. (Any woman, "career reasons" or not, who actually goes through with an abortion, suffers for it and needs compassion rather than cold condemnation. Even the infamous Dr. Henry Morgentaler has admitted in a television interview that he's never seen a woman who really *wanted* an abortion.)

Christians — women *and* men — who principially oppose abortion also do get into situations in which abortion seems to them to be the only answer. CPJ wants to remind Christians that abortion is not a women's issue per se. Men (and not just non-Christian men) still often abandon — literally and/or emotionally — women whom they have impregnated, causing what Vandezande calls "the ultimate exploitation of women."

The real question in all this, he suggests is: Are the people and churches who preach and march against abortion willing to lay themselves on the line, to provide the care and services needed so that people who find themselves considering abortion will clearly know that the financial and emotional help they would need to bring a child into the world instead, is available to them.



In and around the workplace

Ed Vanderkloet

Biblical injunctions and the workplace

My previous column dealt with disputes in the work place as something we should not be surprised about. Recognizing the harsh reality of sin in this world should keep us from becoming triumphalists — people who enthusiastically believe they can usher in the Kingdom of God. It also protects us from deep disappointments when we discover that we cannot heal all things that are broken. And who will deny that the brokenness of life reveals itself also — perhaps especially — in the workplace?

But should Christians be so content with their lot in life that they always yield to the authority of their employer? I've been asked that question on more occasions than I can remember. Often the questioners refer to Jesus' parable of the workers in the vineyard. (Matt. 20) Those hired worked different lengths of time yet received the same pay. We all know the story. When a labour dispute erupts over this "inequity," the owner of the vineyard states that he has the indisputable right to pay those who worked only a few hours the same as those who slaved all day in the burning sun.

Rejoice in God's grace

People who invoke this parable as a proof text for absolute employer's authority forget that Jesus begins his story with, "The Kingdom of heaven is like a landowner ..." Precisely because the parable deals with the Kingdom of heaven, the owner of the vineyard is the sovereign God who can indeed do as He pleases with his property. He promises paradise even to a thug dying on a cross, who repented only in the last moments of his earthly life. Those of us who have served God all our lives have no reason to grumble over such grace. We should rejoice.

In that parable Jesus gives us an illustration of God's infinite mercy towards sinners, not a model collective agreement without overtime rates and seniority provisions. If we use the parable as a sample labour contract, we trivialize the gospel and turn Jesus into a champion of absolute management rights.

Again, some people will ask: Does not the apostle Paul tell slaves to be obedient to their masters? Indeed, he does so in at least two places (Ephesians 6 and Colossians 3), but that does not give us the right to transplant his injunctions into the modern labour scene. Slavery, common in the Roman empire of Paul's days, has been abolished (at least in the Western world) and we can't thank the Lord enough for that. Employees today are free people who may offer their services, skills and talents to whomever they will on the labour market. Usually there is a contract (individual or collective) between such employees and their employers and both are bound to live up to the terms of that contract.

Those who use Paul's words to advocate workers' docility and submission ignore the fruits of two thousand years of civilization. Once at a Christian Labour Association (CLAC) meeting I had a vehement argument with a man who insisted that the Pauline instructions to slaves apply equally to us. But when I asked him how his own not infrequent changing of jobs squared with the book of Philemon, he grudgingly admitted that Onesimus was perhaps not such a role model for modern work relations after all.

All of which does not imply that Paul's words are meaningless for today's work place. In fact, they are as relevant now as they were then. Our dealings with each other as free employees and free employers must reflect something of the characteristics of the Kingdom of God.

Paul exhorts slaves to perform their duties not with an outward show of service to curry favour with others but out of reverence for the Lord, and to put their whole heart into it. And he instructs masters to be just and fair, reminding them that they too have a master in heaven.

Take a moment to look up these words in Colossians 3 and compare them with our work-to-rule campaigns, our shrill slogans about absolute management rights or the sacred right to strike, and you'll discover how relevant St. Paul is for today's work place.

Ed Vanderkloet is executive secretary of the Christian Labour Association of Canada.

New crops to stave off world hunger

Marcus Van Steen

(Canadian Scene) — Officials of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have drawn attention to the fact that, in the midst of widespread hunger, literally thousands of possible food crops are being ignored. Botanists have listed more than 20,000 edible plants rich in food value, yet most of the people of the world derive their nourishment from only about 30 crops.

The main reason for this is that our agricultural development has taken place mainly in Europe and North America. A great deal of research has gone into wringing tremendous yields from those crops that thrive in the temperate zones, such as wheat, rice, maize, potatoes, peas, beans and peanuts.

Not all of these were native to Europe and North America, but they filled a food need and were adapted and improved. This borrowing is continuing. During the past century such tropical and sub-tropical plants as bananas, pineapples, citrus fruits and coconuts have been adapted to our use and developed into major crops. And since the war, the soybean was brought in from Asia to increase our supply of available protein.

Botanists say there are thousands of other food plants which we are not using. Some of them helped nourish the Aztec and Inca civilizations and have been forgotten. Others are still being used in remote communities in Africa and Southeast Asia. Most of them, we are told, are fast-growing, hardy, and resistant to most of the known plant diseases and pests.

The former director of the Smithsonian Institution, Edward Ayensu, is an ardent supporter of the idea of developing other food plants. "You can't tell me," he says, "that we are getting the best foods available by concentrating on a few conventional grains and vegetables. There are many other plants we could cultivate and improve to meet the demands of world hunger."

Any amateur gardener wishing more information about these exotic plants and where to find them should write for an available list of publications to BOSTID Publications, National Research Council, 2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. U.S.A. 20418.

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Editorial

Good stories avoid quick fixes

Last week we sent out our special Christmas issue to more than 20,000 homes. We hope that it will spread joy as quietly and persistently as a fire in the hearth or woodstove of your home. Take your time reading it at intervals. Read some stories aloud to adults and children. Christmas is a time to wrap the warmth of Immanuel around you like a blanket.

Christmas is also a time for stepping out into the cold to do what must be done, like delivering a pamphlet or paper from door to door, inviting a needy family or person into your home, sitting down with an alcoholic in his or her apartment, going tobogganing with a group of kids when you would rather sit by the fire and read.

Warmth can be dangerous to a person's soul. I was reminded of this when looking for stories for the Christmas issue. It's not easy to find a Christmas story that does not burn with the hot flame of sentimentality. I think that Christian writers specially have to fight the inclination towards sentimentality when it comes to producing a Christmas story. Somehow the formula many people go for is: create a miserable situation and find a sudden, miraculous, happy ending, for which God gets all the praise. Or, create a happy situation and suddenly let tragedy hit, out of which the author miraculously salvages a spiritual comfort, so that again, God may be praised.

Quick effects

I am going to postulate a bold statement that will probably leave me open to criticism. It strikes me that the purpose of these sentimental Christian stories is not to glorify God but to manipulate a feeling response in the reader. If the author can get the reader to cry, so much the better. It's really an attempt at achieving a cheap effect.

Someone once said that sentimentality is the flip side of violence. That should give us pause as Christians. We are against violence because it is so destructive. But is sentimentality in the same category? I think it is, because what violence and sentimentality have in common is that both are impatient with the reality of things. Violence wades in and produces a quick "solution," removing the person or thing thought responsible for the problem; sentimentality drips in and changes the appearance of reality with a quick coating of sweet and sad.

Two kinds of violence

See how a writer of violence solves the following dilemma: John has been involved in drugs against his will at first, but later he takes over a drug ring and goes big-time. John's younger brother Pete is a policeman and discovers that he is on the track of his own brother. In a violent shoot-out Pete kills John. Pete is sad, but he did what he had to do.

Now hand the same script to a wonderful Christian writer of sentimental stories and see what blows. Nothing blows. Pete is a Christian cop who begins to pray for John as soon as he finds out that John is a drug dealer. The night before the shoot-out, John gets violently ill and Pete comes to his bedside. John confesses his sinful past and Pete assures him that there is salvation. Now the writer has two choices — either he arranges for John to die with the assurance that he will go to heaven (that is the best solution really, because then Pete does not have to arrest him), or John lives and Pete visits him in jail later on.

Notice that both stories have a violent component: the violent story produces physical violence, the sentimental story, emotional violence. Both have a sentimental component as well. Both violate the need for a story to develop along realistic and creational lines.

Both writers of violent and sentimental stories usually make too many things happen in a short time. There is a lack of patience evident here — a catering to the notion of instant gratification. The embers-in-the-hearth afterglow of such quick-fix stories is often non-existent. Easy come, easy go.

Both kinds of writers have little appreciation for subtleties. Things are easily overstated or driven home with a blunt weapon of description or explanation. Nothing is left to the imagination — everything is up front in living technicolour.

Good-news stories

Some Christian writers produce romantic (rose-coloured) stories, leaving out the reality of sin in their main character(s). They feel that they have to have a good person(s) or a happy ending because a realistic or pessimistic picture might leave the impression that life is meaningless. Somehow, a Christian message has to come out from the story. I think I understand that dilemma. How can we be good-news writers without producing unrealistically good people and endings?

One thing has occurred to me — in our attempt to make things look rosy we are in fact undermining the power of the grace of God. Romanticizing the husband or wife who died, for example, takes away from the need for salvation and ultimately from the glory of God.

Good Christian writers face the reality of life and are not afraid of the feeling component of a story, but they will not manipulate their readers with cheap tricks. They know the difference between sentiment and sentimentality. It's not easy to write Christian fiction, but some Christians are getting better, and that's encouraging. We hope that last week's Christmas issue reflects some of those improvements.

BW

Letters

Reader comments on "salty" issue

As a so-called "expert" in the use of de-icing chemicals, I would like to add a few comments to your article "From Salt to Corn." (C.C., Oct. 23)

First, some of the problems with the use of road salt are simply a result of excessive application. Road salt is generally a good de-icer, but at temperatures below -6°C, its effectiveness drops off quickly. Ironically, that is when work crews start to apply extra salt to try to compensate. As a result, both the normal amount and the extra "dose" are generally wasted at those lower temperatures.

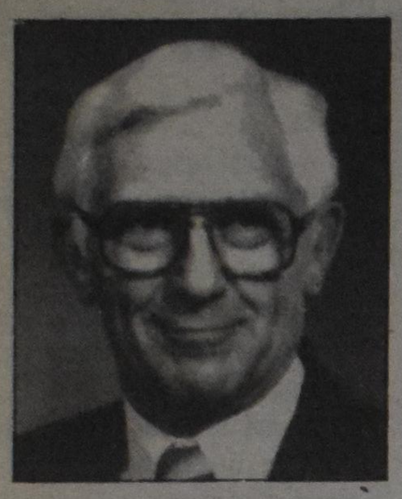
Second, I do not expect calcium magnesium acetate (CMA) to gain widespread use — and that's not only because of cost. Tests have shown that CMA is not as effective as road salt and is basically a poor de-icer. However, it is non-corrosive and less of an environmental hazard.

Third, in some areas of the U.S., a unique method called "pre-wetting" salt has gained some popularity. This system involves the spreading of road salt that has been soaked with a solution of calcium chloride while either in the stock pile or in the back of the spreader truck. The calcium chloride is itself a powerful de-icer, and even in small amounts it increases the effectiveness of road salt, even at temperatures as low as -15°C. This greatly reduces the amount of salt required to be applied. The coating of liquid also helps the salt stick to the road and thereby reduces waste due to "bounce and scatter," and reduces the amount that is blown off the road by traffic.

Research is still being done in the area of de-icing chemicals. A balance must be struck between cost, corrosiveness, and environmental concerns.

Tom Bergstra,
Sarnia, Ontario

SKYLIGHTS/WILLIAM R. RANG



"What the man was saying is that many of us do not always practise what we preach."

In all things ...

At our school we have children from half-a-dozen different church denominations. I'm sure that each family considers the denomination to which they belong to be truest to the Word of God. If not, they would have to change churches, of course!

I always believed my denomination to be at the top of them all. Of course! For years I even believed that people of different denominations would agree with me.

Then, the father of one of my students sobered me up. Oh yes, he said, you Christian Reformed folks have a strong and dedicated church membership, but you make it look as if faithfulness to a church will achieve salvation. You have a beautiful confession, certainly. And you folks really know how to sacrifice. Excellent! You're hard workers, too. Great! On Sundays you all go to church, and most of you twice. Super!

But your church yard is littered with cigarette butts and many of you folks use rough language: Many of you separate faith from business. Nor can I understand how you can have open bars at your weddings. Your moral conduct is not nearly as Christ-centred as it ought to be.

Lack of integration

My heart sank. What the man was saying is that many of us do not always practise what we preach. I was so disturbed by his assessment that I started to pay closer attention to the situation.

The scriptures say time and again "in all things." God belongs *in all things*. "All things" are a few pages long in any concordance. The Bible is full of "all things." But are we?

Thirty years of teaching has taught me that it is difficult to include God in all we do. It goes against our sinful nature. It's not in our genes. I've learned that by and large, students don't ask God to bless their school work. They admit that they don't pray for learning nor for their teachers or others they associate with there.

Students also find it difficult to see the Lord in and behind things they learn. Beautiful projects are handed in on a wide variety of subjects — painstaking works on science and geography. But when describing an animal or a flower, a mountain range or a river valley, the Lord is not mentioned. Yes, we tend to separate life from him. We are inclined to leave him out of "all things."

That worries me. I'm not worried about my students only. I'm also worried about their parents, myself, my church. Faith and aspirin are not alike. We should not take a dose only when we have a headache — or a heartache.

Let's all get busy. The yards of our lives need some care — for his sake.

William R. Rang is principal of the Dunnville, Ontario, Christian School.

Longer Letter

Do we really want memorable preaching? a pastor asks

I regret to hear that Rev. Kuntz is quite sick. I would like to express my appreciation for the recent item on preaching in his column. (C.C., Nov. 13) It was indeed food for thought. I would like to make a small contribution to the discussion.

The thrust of that item, I think, was that we need *memorable* preaching. I agree that we should consider ways to improve preaching. The article refers to a "good" preacher whose messages are not memorable, and, therefore, such messages cannot be discussed.

We would do well to examine the practice of preaching in the light of Question and Answer 91 of the Heidelberg Catechism: "What do we do that is good?" In light of the answer there, good preaching must arise from true faith, conform to God's law, and be done to his glory; and good preaching is not determined by what *we* think is right, or by established human tradition. In other words, maybe our definition of what "good" preaching is needs to be re-formed.

Is unmemorable preaching really good preaching? Obviously not, considering all the calls in the Bible to remember God, his acts and his word. But how can we improve it? The column suggested visual aids and sermon outlines, etc. I agree to a certain extent, and I use some of those myself. But discussing the use of visual aids by themselves sidesteps a more important consideration.

In the same C.C. issue, Henry Knoop reminded us that "the medium is still the message." I would judge that, for preaching, this means that the medium is the preacher as a person. The preacher might use visual aids, as the prophets and Jesus did, but the point still must be understood that it is the *preacher* who uses the visual aids, and more fundamentally, that the preacher *is* a visual aid.

Is this not what the catechism is trying to get at when it talks about the "*living* preaching of his word?" (Q and A 98). A personal, living God and Saviour can, in the last analysis, only be communicated by a person in whom Christ lives. For that reason, by the way, I am very hesitant about replacing reading sermons with tapes or video/films. We should ask ourselves the fundamental question: "How will this medium become the message?"

One last thought, before this becomes a full-blown article instead of a letter! Back in 1973, the Christian Reformed Church produced a booklet entitled "Called to Serve," which included the following statistics:

We remember 20 per cent of what we hear.

We remember 40 per cent of what we hear and see illustrated.

We remember 60 per cent of what we hear, see illustrated, and discuss.

We remember 80 per cent of what we hear, see illustrated, discuss, and *do*.

If the church wants to make the communication of the gospel more effective, how could the above findings by psychologists be applied to such activities of the church as preaching?

I believe one thing these "findings" tell us in a fresh way is something that the word of God already told by parents: that it (the word) calls us to obedience with compelling authority. We must be *doers* of the word, and not hearers only. We do not gather for worship only to learn, but to learn to *obey*. One implication, I should think, is that services in Reformed churches should require us to *do* more in obedient, covenantal response. If the preacher preaches on "Sing to the Lord a new song ..." (Psalm 98:1) and the congregation is asked to sing that Psalm (particularly from the new *Psalter Hymnal*, for example), they would most likely remember, and, in fact, remember the point well enough to discuss it. And if we not only preach on intercessory prayer, but then *do* it together in a fresh way, it will be remembered and discussed.

Could it be, though, that our churches do not really *want* memorable preaching? If so, why not?

Pastor Joe Veltman,
Riverside Christian Reformed Church,
Wellandport, Ontario

Editorial Policy: We encourage our readers to write brief responses to material published in our paper. Please specify the issue and article your are commenting on.

A long letter, 500 to 750 words, may be published in the upper right hand corner of this page provided it meets editorial standards.
Letters may be abbreviated or excerpts may be published to meet editorial requirements. Unsigned letters will not be published but names may be withheld upon request.

Appreciates getting soaked

"Getting soaked in the rushing waters" is a very exciting title for the Holy Spirit conference article [C.C., Nov. 20]. I can just hear most Dutch readers say, "We're too *nuchter* (reserved) for that."

Feelings, emotions, and ecstasies may run sky-high at wedding receptions, anniversary celebrations and birthday parties, but most Reformed Christians would consider it a violation of reverence to express anything but quiet formality in worship.

You expressed a similar fear by stating you wanted to guard your person from being "sucked into" a fairly strong maelstrom of spirituality. Very understandable!

I appreciate the fairness, honesty and spirit of love in which both you and Pastor Wildeboer wrote your respective articles. You went there to evaluate, analyse, discern, and learn, and that is a beautiful attitude for a reporter and a minister. No one could be offended by what was written and how it was written. Building each other up in love is so preferable to what could happen instead.

God wants to be worshipped in spirit and truth. Truth is no problem, but we tend to worship with our minds rather than in spirit. Our intellects can be a stumbling block to worship.

Peter Tensen,
Brantford, Ontario

BEYOND BELIEF ™

Story revived memories

Just a word of appreciation to Berta Hosmar for her story *"'n Halve bos gladiolen"* (C.C., Oct. 23)

I appreciate the quality of writing and really enjoyed the story. It brought back many memories since my family struggled with the "Article 31" questions as well.

Johanna Peetoom,
Willowdale, Ontario

Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Catholics, Calvinists, Lutherans celebrate Reformation

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO, Ont. — Grace Christian Reformed Church of Toronto was the host to a landmark Reformation Day service which featured addresses by local Roman Catholic and Lutheran pastors. The service was held Nov. 9 and attended by about 200 people.

Its theme was "to celebrate God's faithfulness." The accompanying biblical text was "the just shall live by faith." Sponsored by the Agincourt Ministerial Association, the service was an exercise in grassroots ecumenism.

Sins of the past

Father Terry Gallagher of St. Bartholomew's Roman Catholic Church chose to read Matthew 18:15-17. He said that Luther and pre-Reformation leaders like Wycliffe and Hus followed the requirements of Matthew 18 in pointing out the sins of the 15th and 16th century church, but their admonitions were not heeded. He said that the Roman Catholic Church has needed to confess its sin toward these priests, and the sin of the notoriously corrupt popes like Leo X, Alexander VI and Justin II. Identifying with the spirit of Vatican II, Gallagher admits always having emphasized Bible study, but when he did so as a missionary in the Philippines (as a member of the Scarboro Foreign Missions Society) he ran into trouble with church people who stressed the sacramentalism of the church. Gallagher urged that now, 23 years after Vatican II, we Christians join together to confess our sins to each other and to God.

Demons of the present

After the reading of Isaiah 60:1-3 and John 17:20-23, Rev. Troy Beretta, pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, emphasized the need for the light of the gospel to shine in the dark places where devils and demons live even today. In our sophisticated world, we do not recognize them, but Beretta said he could identify with Martin Luther's hatred of devils because he encountered demonology in his earlier missionary work in Peru. The need for continuing reformation today, said Beretta, includes the need for Christians to stand united against today's demons, which are as real as they have ever been. Yet these demons cannot be downed by a merely "spiritual message" which ignores the concrete life situations through which they work.

Beretta's meditation was followed by the communal singing of "A Mighty Fortress is our God" which includes the text: "The old satanic foe has sworn to work us woe! With craft and dreadful might he arms himself to fight. On earth he has no equal. No strength of ours can match his might! We would be lost, rejected. But now a champion comes to fight, whom God himself elected."

Rooted in foreign and local ecumenism

It is no coincidence that the three organizers of this Reformation service, Gallagher, Beretta and Rev. Simon Wolfert, pastor of Grace Christian Reformed Church, have all served as foreign missionaries. Overseas, they learned that all churches need to stand together against the forces of evil, and in that kind of situation they each learned how to depend on the strengths of other churches and their members.

In addition, the Agincourt Ministerial Association has a long history of co-operative Christian ministry in Scarborough. Joint Bible studies, special ecumenical worship services, annual round-robin visitation of other churches in the ministerial, and co-operative pre-marriage courses have paved the way for the kind of trust and mutual respect — including respect for differences — which were needed to co-ordinate this service.

It was not easy to get agreement to set up this service. The Catholic Church was hesitant, but in the end contributed a young people's musical group, providing a celebrative spark. Grace CRC's council was also hard to persuade, but eventually agreed. But many attendees felt the service so opened their eyes that an ecumenical Reformation Day service may become an annual event in Agincourt.

Eareckson Tada to convene congress for disabled

LOS ANGELES (CFD) — Joni Eareckson Tada, noted artist and author, has announced plans for a national Congress on the Church and the Disabled at the Billy Graham Center on the Campus of Wheaton College, July 7-9, 1988.

Featured speakers for the congress, in addition to Tada, include James I. Packer, John MacArthur, Philip Yancey, and John Willke, President of National Right to Life. Music, featuring vocalists Ken Medema and Sandy Rios, instrumentalists, and a deaf choir, will be under the direction of Cliff Barrows of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

Stressing the need for churches to become more active in helping disabled individuals and their families, Tada pointed out that there are 35 million people with significant handicaps in the United States, yet only five per cent of our churches have a ministry or outreach to the disabled.

Families under stress

"Why do the families of disabled people need the church?" Tada asks. "Because they are under severe stress. Due to fatigue or illness, economic strain, social isolation, lack of information, or lack of respite care, four out of every five families containing a handicapped family member experience a divorce. Yet where is the church in all this? We should be the ones extending the helping hand and the cup of cold water."

"And disabled people have so much to give in return," Tada continued. "They yearn to share their gifts and talents and abilities with the able-bodied members of their congregation. And churches can really benefit from the full participation in church life of all members, whether disabled or otherwise."

Tada pointed to her own experience in the life of her church by saying, "It's a delight to worship together, disabled and able-bodied, and join in praise to God who has allowed all things, not only for our good, but for his glory."

The theme of the Congress on the Church and the Disabled will be "Power ... perfected in weakness," a biblical concept which Tada says is often neglected in today's society. "But time and time again," Joni recalls, "God seems to delight in taking the foolish things — the weak and the lowly things — and accomplishing marvelous feats through his grace and power. And as the church opens its doors to *all*, we can witness God's life-changing power in the lives of the disabled and able-bodied alike."

Baptist church in Tennessee installs first woman

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (EP) — Nancy Hastings Sehested became the first woman pastor in the 71-year history of Prescott Memorial Baptist Church in Memphis when she was formally installed at the beginning of last month.

Sehested is the first woman pastor of a Southern Baptist Church in Tennessee, and the church's choice of her has been a centre of controversy. The Shelby County Baptist Association voted in October to exclude the church from its membership, but the church went ahead with its plans. Four churches of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) have female senior pastors; at 236 members Prescott is the largest of them.

Sehested's installation ceremony carried a wedding theme, and she asked her congregation, "Are we prepared for this? This is our wedding day, the day of our mutual covenant."

And though no one asked if anyone could show cause why Sehested and the church should not "wed," a man identifying himself as Brother Sky Blue of the Church of the New Jerusalem, chose to "speak now" rather than "forever holding his peace." The man disrupted the service saying, "This female Jezebel is going to lead you to hell. All you Southern Baptists are going to hell." He placed literature on the communion table and touched the communion loaves before being escorted from the sanctuary.

The congregation sang, "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands" and broke into laughter as a chorus of "He's got all the liberals in his hands" began.

The SBC has not welcomed Sehested: members of the Memphis Southern Baptist ministerial community were notably absent at her installation, and in 1984 the denomination passed a resolution opposing women pastors. But the president-elect of the American Baptist churches, Harold Davis, attended the installation ceremony and pledged his convention's support. "You will not be separated from God by anything," assured Davis. "Not by bigotry, nor by discrimination, or dogmatism ... or any other philosophical invectiveness of man."

At a brief press conference following her installation, Sehested said, "Prescott in calling me has made visible the strong feeling of call many women have. We are not issues. We are people with a strong sense of call. This is a discouraging time to be a Southern Baptist. We have to look for some alternative structures and alternative ways of service. It may be a time to listen to new winds of the spirit."

One million South Koreans pray in Seoul

HONG KONG (ODNS) — One million people gathered in Seoul's Yoido Square for the inaugural "Grand Prayer Meeting for the Nation and People" on Oct. 3. Leaders of South Korea's Protestant denominations called for a day of prayer to draw attention to the fact that "the light of Christ does not appear in our society even though there are 10 million Christians" in Korea.

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Religion/Theology

The Lord's Supper at Corinth

John Valk

For most people in Reformed churches, the Lord's Supper has come to mean a commemoration of *the* event which marks the essence of the Christian faith. Its frequent celebration permits one to participate in the great sacrifice made by Jesus Christ, to confess one's sin, to find assurance for forgiveness, and to receive the promise of eternal life. As such it represents a solemn occasion for serious reflection.

The solemnness is, of course, interpreted in different ways by different people. For some it means somberness and brings feelings of tremendous shortcoming and failure — so much so that in a few churches only the minister (and his wife) are considered worthy to partake of the elements. For most, however, participation is sought and encouraged. Yet, the manner in which the Lord's Supper is conducted is a reflection of the understood solemnity. The formality of the occasion indicates what a congregation perceives to be the *required* orderliness of an important liturgical rite.

To some extent this stems from the rather stern words of Paul to the church in Corinth. (1 Cor. 11:17-34) Paul perceived the conduct of these Christians to be an affront to the essential meaning which Jesus conveyed to the disciples at the last meal in the upper room. The behaviour of the Corinthians was a direct result of factions developing among them which, according to Gerd Theissen, a German theologian who has written much about the early church, were largely of a sociological, rather than theological, nature.

Communal meal

Members of the early church frequently came together for worship and fellowship. On festive occasions this may have involved the sharing of a meal. This practice of eating communally was highly regarded. It was a common feature among certain Jewish groups (Pharisees and Essenes) as it was among some pagan religious cults. Festive meals were not uncommon in the life of voluntary associations and as such were a familiar aspect of urban social life. For Christians to meet at intervals for festive meals would, therefore, not have been out of the ordinary. The Lord's Supper would have been celebrated at these communal meals, which came to be known as "love (*agape*) feasts."

In Corinth, however, disorders erupted. The problem was not so much with the communion itself, but more so with the festive meal preceding it. Paul felt that the conduct of the people was inappropriate for followers of Jesus, especially if they intended to commemorate his great sacrifice. The inappropriateness was related to the differences in social practices of the people in the Corinthian church. The basic divisions which Paul speaks about were between the (relatively) rich and the (relatively) poor.

Social discrimination

It was not uncommon, when people gathered together for banquets or feasts in Roman or Greek society, for the more distinguished guests to receive treatment appropriate to their social class. As a result, these gatherings frequently became occasions for conspicuous display of social position. Social distance was often measured in terms of food served to certain guests. In the Roman *collegia,* for example, senior officers were often assigned larger quantities of food than ordinary guests. Patrons were known to make clear distinctions between their freedmen clients and friends of their own social rank by the quality of food they provided to each. The feast, therefore, frequently became more an occasion to mark social distinctions than to share a common meal.

When Christians gathered for their common meal, it would not be surprising if some of these same social customs also crept in. Thus, Gaius, whose home was large enough to accommodate the entire church in Corinth, might be tempted to regard himself in much the same way as a wealthy patron of a private club. If he made distinctions in the food he served, it would simply be in keeping with accustomed traditions.

Photo: *Jerusalem City of Jesus*

The Interior of the Upper Room in Jerusalem. Although the room may date back only to the Crusader period, in light of a long and strong tradition now corroborated by archaeological research, there can be no doubt as to the historicity and significance of this place for Christians.

There were some in society who detested this practice. The Roman official Pliny, for one, objected to this humiliation of the "have-nots" and called for a less offensive policy for the patron class. But Paul, much earlier than Pliny, had objected to such behaviour because it ran contrary to everything the Lord's Supper intended to convey.

The conduct of the church members, according to Paul, was utterly selfish. Each member gave the appearance of being interested only in his or her own meal. The communal aspect seemed to have been forgotten. When they each went about with their own meal in their accustomed manner, the very social stratification which the Eucharist was intended to eliminate continued unabated. It was not Paul's intent, in one fell swoop, to dismantle social divisions of long standing. However, he did emphasize that "in the Lord" these things had little merit. When Christians gathered to commemorate what Christ had done on the cross, they were to be united as one people, one church.

Primary purpose

The prime purpose of the Lord's Supper was not to satisfy one's appetite. Nor was it to flaunt particular styles of alimentary habits. The wealthy, with their large quantities of food and wine, might fall prey to becoming gorged and inebriated. The poor, with their lack of proper sustenance, might be prone to go hungry.

To prevent this type of imbalance, Paul encouraged those who wished to appease their hunger to do so in the privacy of their own home in the manner to which they were accustomed.

The coming together for the Eucharist was indeed to be a communal celebration which could be done in the context of a common meal. But, it was no place for highlighting different standards of behaviour or social rank. The norms of a community of love were to dictate, and this entailed the transformation of the multiplicity of individuals into a unity. Divisions of role and status were to be replaced by the unity of brothers and sisters in a new human community.

All of this, of course, did not mean that hunger could also not be satisfied. After all, a communal meal was also for the purpose of eating. But, this had to be strictly secondary, as did the social manner in which one ate and drank. To avoid disruptive social division, Paul encouraged proper discernment in the eating of the bread and drinking of the cup.

Liturgical changes

Exactly when the celebration of the Lord's Supper came to be separated from the communal meal is difficult to uncover. It came to be combined with regular liturgical worship probably when the church expanded and more structure was needed to be introduced in the services. What has occurred, as a result, is that over the centuries the Eucharist has become much more formalized. Today in virtually every denomination an ordained or elected ecclesiastical representative must be present to oversee the proper distribution of the elements in the proper (usually institutional) setting. In Reformed churches, to celebrate communion outside of the formal setting receives only guarded approval. As such, to engage in a common meal with brothers and sisters in Christ and break the bread and drink the wine might be questioned. However, such occasions can be very meaningful within the proper context.

It is not clear if today's formality was really Paul's intention when he so sternly addressed the people of Corinth. To be sure, formality and structure has its place. However, one can also ask if we have not been so overly cautious that we have introduced certain measures in hopes that the *structure* itself would prevent us from "eating and drinking judgment upon ourselves." Jesus never placed much stock in formal structure. He was more concerned with the "heart" of the matter.

John Valk is a campus minister at the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton.

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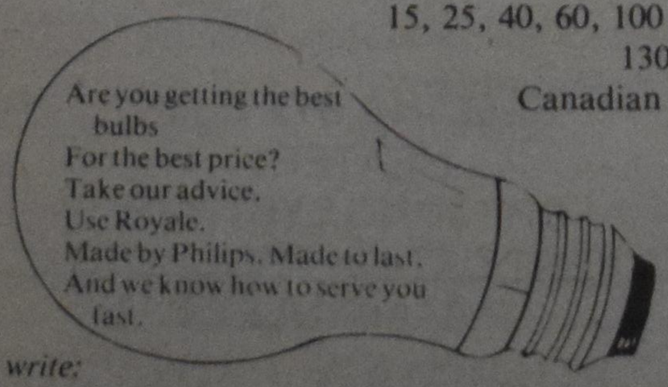
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Feature

Missionary aviation fellowship changes with the times

Paul De Groot

It has one of the world's largest fleets of civilian aircraft. Its 140 airplanes and 300 pilots make nearly 400 flights a day and fly to about 4,000 destinations.

But few of its aircraft seat more than four people, and you won't earn frequent flier points on Missionary Aviation Fellowship aircraft. On the other hand, fares are low: about 20 per cent of what the trip actually costs.

Founded as the Second World War closed, by Christian aviators who saw the potential of aircraft for reaching remote areas with the Christian gospel, MAF has grown steadily over the years, acquiring a vast amount of experience in flying into remote, mostly tropical regions.

Dave Voetman has been flying with MAF for more than 20 years, logging more than 1.5 million miles in small single engine aircraft, most of them in Africa. In an interview in Edmonton recently, Voetman tossed off the names of African villages, capitals and regions with the calm authority of a man who has spent his life threading his way through them.

Banquet money pays pilots

MAF's clients are usually missionary agencies, churches and relief and development groups. When a British television crew emerged from the interior of Ethiopia with film which galvanized the world into a massive relief effort, they flew on a MAF plane. The aircraft were later involved in shipping supplies into many of the depressed areas.

"That generated the greatest philanthropic, humanitarian effort in the history of mankind," says Voetman.

Users pay a fee which covers only the running costs of the aircraft: fuel, insurance, oil.

"So we fly and maintain the airplanes free."

Buying, maintaining and piloting aircraft costs money, however, which is why Voetman was in Edmonton. Pilots raise their own salaries from donors, and MAF sponsors banquets, such as the one in Edmonton, to raise money for aircraft.

For Voetman, the years in Africa have not been easy. He was once taken prisoner for two weeks in the Sudan. For long periods, the sound of gunfire was part of his daily routine. He has often flown into or over war zones. So far, MAF has not lost any aircraft as a result of military hostilities, but Voetman recognizes that the risk is rarely far away.

"We've had planes land with bullet holes in them."

Teenagers with missiles

African rebels no longer carry spears and arrows, he notes. In the jungle below their planes, MAF pilots are aware that a teenager may be shouldering a surface-to-air missile which could make short work of an unarmored and unidentified Cessna flying a few hundred metres overhead.

The changes which Voetman has seen in Africa in recent years are a source of both encouragement and despair, he says, easily tossing out statistics to prove his point.

On the one hand is overwhelming evidence that much of the continent is actually sliding backward economically. Since it earned independence, Zaire has lost 90 per cent of its paved roads. In the last 18 months, per capita income in Mozambique has dropped from an already-low $240 to $140.

Mauritania is a basket case. It grows eight per cent of its own food, and purchases another two per cent. The remaining 90 per cent of its food needs must come from donations.

Photo: MAF-Canada

MAF-Canada pilot Art Mitchell loading a plane with supplies and national pastors for a flight in Zaire, Africa.

Wars — tribal, ideological and religious — make it impossible for many Africans to lead normal lives. All that most Africans want to do, Voetman says, is "plant their crops." But collapsing transportation systems, and the constant turmoil of insurgency and destruction make that impossible, he says.

Precarious position

MAF must play a delicate balancing act in such situations, remaining friends with both sides in order to carry out its humanitarian work. Rebel groups will often tell MAF pilots where roads have been mined, for example, but possession of such intelligence can be viewed by a government as an act of treason.

Much of MAF's work in Africa involves evacuating war casualties or flying in medical supplies and doctors. In one region, five million people are completely dependent on the medical care which arrives in MAF aircraft.

As expensive as it is to ship fuel and food by aircraft, it is often the cheapest way to do so, and in other cases, the only way.

On the other hand, progress for many Africans cannot be measured in economic terms but must be seen as political and social. Much of the economic infrastructure which has disappeared was brought by European colonists who have now gone, leaving Africans to govern themselves, Voetman says.

Religiously, the continent has undergone a significant shift, he explains. About 30 per cent of Africans are Christians, up from only six per cent 30 years ago. Most of them live in the southern half of the continent. There, some countries are 80 per cent Christian.

The churches also went through a colonial period when most of their pastors were white Europeans. Today, foreign pastors play a relatively small part in the national churches, which are by and large self-governing.

"Eighty per cent of our passengers are nationals" of African countries, says Voetman.

MAF has changed with the continent. One of its main priorities now is to put aviation itself in the hands of the Third World. The fund-raising dinner in Edmonton, for example, raised money for a flying school in Papua-New Guinea.

Although his daily environment for many years was war, hunger and corruption, Voetman has also seen the compassionate side of human nature, particularly when it comes to aid. He notes that East Block and Arab countries have done little to assist Africans, but Western Christian countries have done much.

"It is the compassion of the West that is being demonstrated in this crisis."

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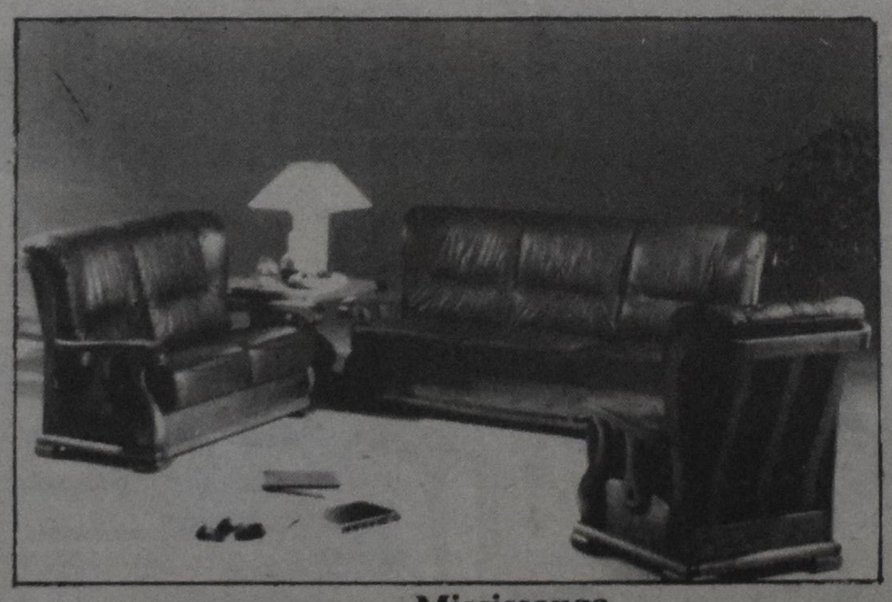

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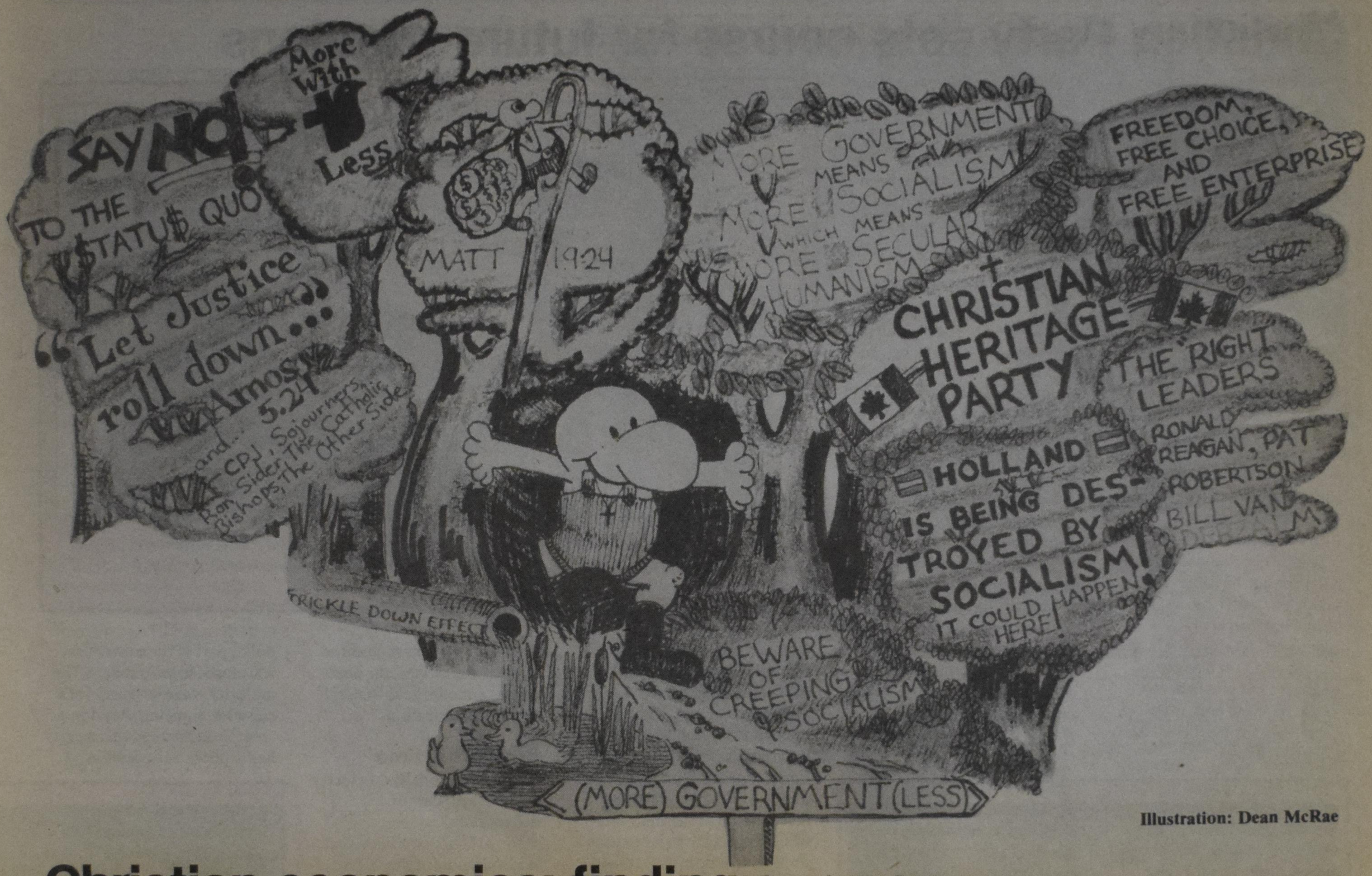

SAY NO TO THE STATU$ QUO
"Let Justice roll down..." Amos 5.24
and... CPJ, Sojourners, Ron Sider, The Catholic Bishops, The Other Side
More With Less
MATT 19:24
MORE GOVERNMENT MEANS MORE SOCIALISM WHICH MEANS MORE SECULAR HUMANISM
FREEDOM, FREE CHOICE, AND FREE ENTERPRISE
CHRISTIAN HERITAGE PARTY
THE RIGHT LEADERS
HOLLAND IS BEING DESTROYED BY SOCIALISM!
IT COULD HAPPEN HERE!
RONALD REAGAN, PAT ROBERTSON, BILL VAN
TRICKLE DOWN EFFECT
BEWARE OF CREEPING SOCIALISM
(MORE) GOVERNMENT (LESS)

Illustration: Dean McRae

Christian economics: finding our way

Dean McRae

Developing a Christian view of economics is difficult. We can easily feel intimidated by Christians making claims and counter-claims of socialism and capitalism. Capitalism on one hand exalts free enterprise, individual initiative and private property, while socialism calls for more government spending and a re-ordering of the economic structure to meet the needs of the poor. Indeed, economics can seem to be an area of extremes, with no middle ground.

The result of this polarization and confusion is being tempted to have nothing to do with economics, to stick instead to more "clearcut" gospel calls: supporting Christian schools, helping the handicapped, supporting Third World missionaries. However, economic issues like social justice, day care, taxation, and minimum income are too important to ignore.

We should take very seriously God's warnings about the love of money and the neglect of the poor.

Consider, then, the needs of the poor as we examine how the claims of capitalism and socialism relate to them.

It is important to realize how inseparable capitalism and Christianity have become. Among the majority of Reformed and evangelical Christians, for example, it is almost automatic to support the most capitalistic or right-wing candidate at election time. Capitalism is seen as guaranteeing "Christian values" such as individual freedom and the right to determine one's economic future. Capitalists believe they should be able to give freely to help the poor instead of having the government take ("steal") their money and redistribute it. The capitalist also has strong feelings about private property. The stewardship of a person's wealth and possessions is a private matter between the individual and God. Possessions are rarely seen as a problem; "they become idols only if one lets them."

The capitalist believes that capitalism provides for a far greater gross national product and per capita income than other economic systems, thereby creating jobs and opportunities for the poor. The remaining poor can then be cared for by churches and private charities.

Three strikes against capitalism

While there is a strong measure of truth in these sentiments, there is also much that is not considered. There are at least three basic problems with capitalism: an over-emphasis on individual freedom, on materialism, and an insensitivity towards the poor.

Capitalism is overly concerned with individual freedom. It sees freedom as an absolute and something never to be infringed upon. The capitalist especially emphasizes the necessity for freedom to create businesses without government regulation and to earn money with minimal taxation. Like most of modern culture, capitalists are too concerned with their rights and freedoms and not enough with their responsibilities. The Bible always links freedom with responsibility. Capitalists must forego their ideology in the face of basic human needs that are sometimes only eased through government assistance. The fact must be faced that even the effects of a booming economy and private charities do not come close to meeting the needs of the poor.

As Christians we are to make the needs of the poor a priority. We are to make sure that they are being taken care of. Capitalists tend to be financially responsible only to themselves and can become increasingly self-indulgent and gratuitous with their money. They often easily dismiss the poor and reject government assistance programs because they hear of those who abuse the system. Some capitalists are too skeptical and apathetic when they hear of the needs of the poor. It is sad that in many Western European countries where the percentage of people who call themselves Christians is significantly less, there is a much more just distribution of wealth than in our "more Christian" societies in North America.

Socialism inefficient

In contrast to capitalism, socialism's main emphasis is on justice. By taxing corporations and the rich and by restructuring society's economy, socialism seeks to provide opportunity and basic income to the poor. Socialism can indeed go a long way toward providing social justice. However, it does have some serious flaws. It tends to be inefficient. It is blind to any virtues of capitalism and, finally, tends to secularize Christianity.

One problem with socialism is that there are none of the checks and accountability factors of the market place to make it more efficient. Socialism often erodes the work ethic: there is little incentive to do things to the best of one's ability. Money is spent too freely. Jobs are duplicated. There is poor screening of applicants for social assistance; as a result most people do not work as hard as they should and they become less thrifty than they perhaps could be. Such a tendency is basic human nature and socialists fail to see the virtue of efficiency that capitalism provides. Instead, socialists see capitalists only as greedy and exploitive. Moreover, capitalists are seen as people who obtain their riches at the expense of the poor, particularly in relationship to Third World countries. Socialists often do not consider that culture, religion, government corruption and crop failures, etc., are also major factors leading to poverty in the Third World. In Canada, too, there are many reasons for poverty: layoffs, recessions, and single parent families, and so on.

If capitalists such as the self-employed businesspeople and "entrepreneurs" are inherently greedy, one has to consider what that says about the Reformed community, which has such an abundance of these types. Certainly there has been some greed. Businesses have expanded at the expense of marriages, families and Kingdom work; but is that the total picture? Many "Reformed capitalists" are also generous supporters of Christian schools and other causes. Ambition does not always have to be based on greed. Aren't virtues such as self-reliance, initiative-taking and a desire to work hard also often a part of capitalism? We must remember that while capitalism can lead to materialism, it also can be an effective producer of wealth and jobs. As French socialist President Francois Mitterand said after a few years in office, "In order to invest, one needs capital, one must make profits and earn money. We can no longer bury under taxes and social premiums those who take care of the French prosperity."

Continued on page 12 ...

Feature

Christian Party sets course for future elections

Bert Witvoet

HAMILTON, Ont. — For most delegates to the first convention of the Christian Heritage Party, the business of voting on resolutions was a brand new experience. Many had never been part of a political organization before. Politics was an area that belonged to the world, of which they should not or had not wanted to be a part, up to this point.

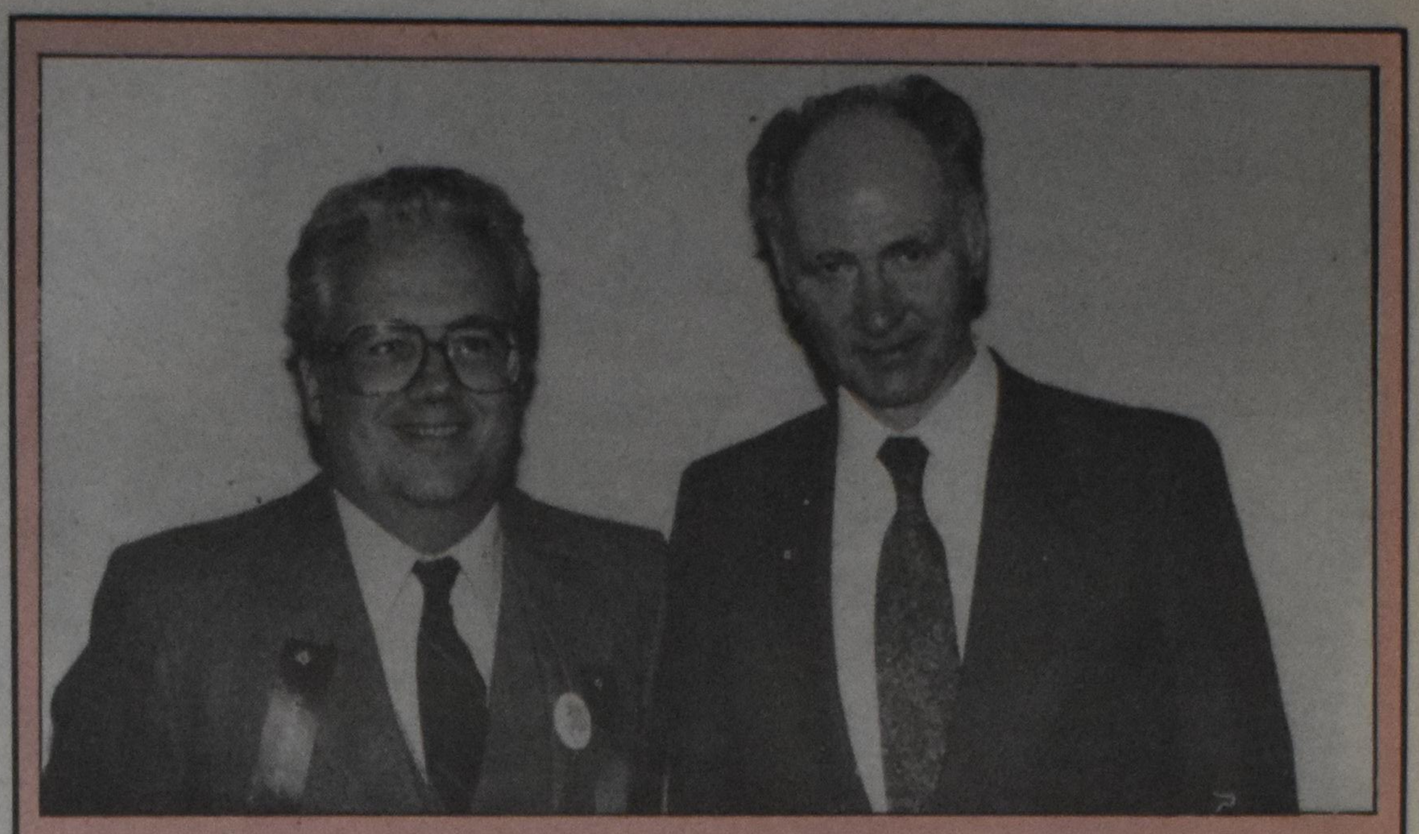
But here they were, some 500 voting delegates from many parts of Canada, assembled in a large meeting room of the Hamilton Convention Centre, with a large map of Canada behind the front table, the Canadian and provincial flags above it, and a mandate, stated in the introduction to their convention kit, to "develop a blueprint for Canada's future." Heady stuff.

It soon became evident to the participants that the event taking place on Nov. 18, 19 and 20 had been superbly organized. A three-ring binder contained all the delegates needed to know in order to participate and anticipate. Gentle but firm voices at the mike did the rest.

Heritage resolutions

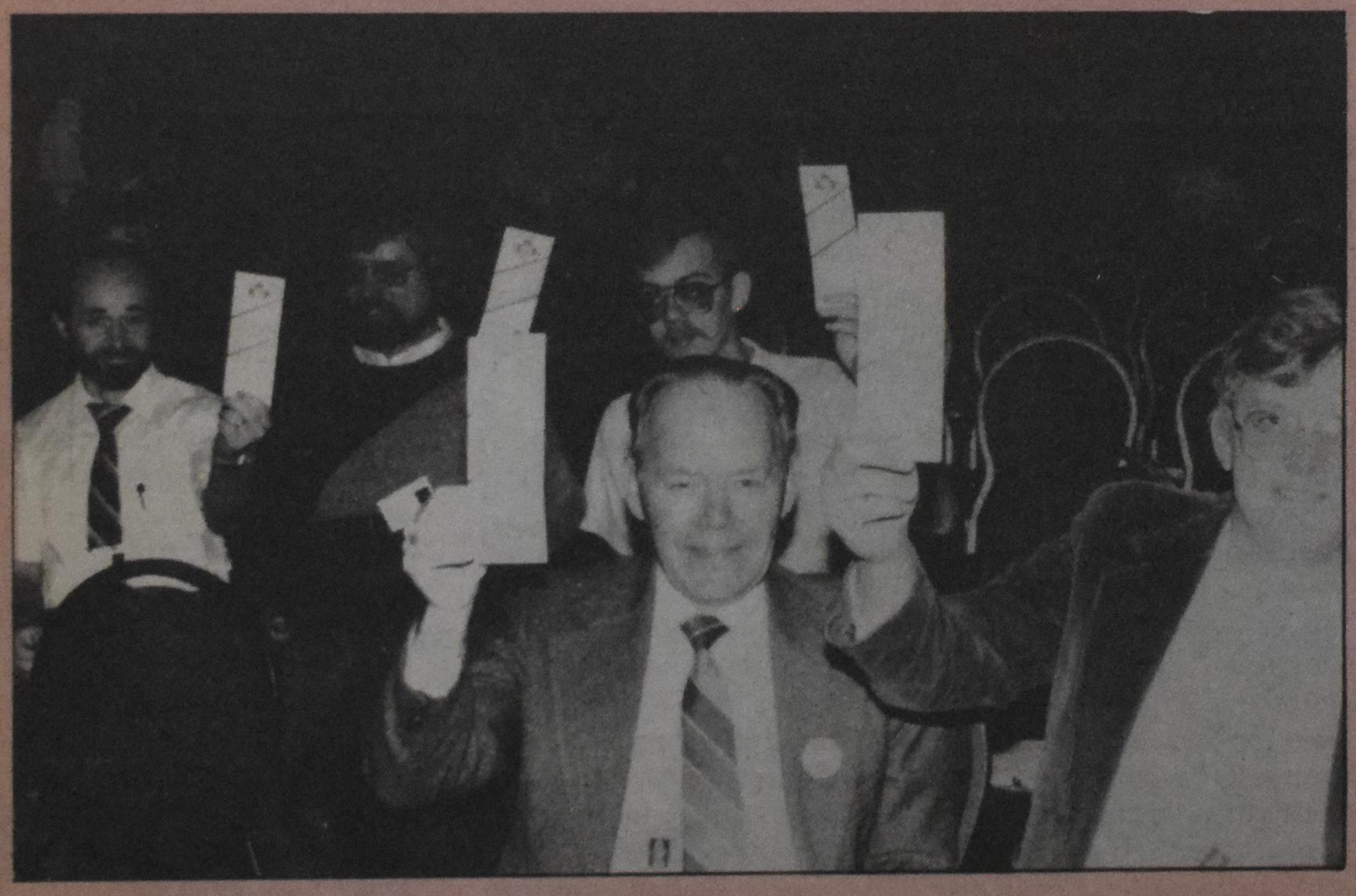
The greater part of the agenda consisted of debating and voting on the 300 resolutions that the Policy Committee had prepared for this convention. There were four booklets with resolutions that had been sent to delegates ahead of time.

Booklet #1 dealt with "National Identity," and contained resolutions on patriotism, respect for Christian heritage, national sovereignty and defense, as well as foreign policies, foreign aid, immigration, South Africa, Soviet Union and a host of other items. It's hard to understand that all these fall under the heading "national identity." Can justice be done to the refugee question, for example, if the overriding concern is identity?



Two men at the top: from l. to r.: Bil Stilwell, President of CHP, and Ed Van Woudenberg, leader of the party. Both men were promoted from interim to unqualified leaders in free elections.

When all the policies had been adopted in several sessions, the floor was opened to suggestions from the delegates for future policy. Seen speaking into the microphone is Gaylord Newman from Provincher, Manitoba. Newman would like the party to develop a moral stance on nuclear technology. He himself works in the nuclear industry and feels that a positive attitude towards nuclear energy is warranted, though he appreciates the watchdog role played by Greenpeace.



This is the manner in which delegates voted at the policy session. Since the policy sessions were closed to the press, we had to ask these co-operative delegates to simulate a vote. Fron row, l. to r.: Mr. Feyer of Hamilton and Floyd Van Pelt of Elgin, Ont.

The second and largest booklet dealt with "National Economics." Since there is a fairly large representation of small business people in the membership of the CHP, one would expect the party to have something worthwhile to say about economics. Of course, the economy, being an important sector of Canadian society, deserves special attention. In this section the party promotes responsible free enterprise, a growth economy, an end to deficit financing, good resource management, respect for family farming, co-operative labour relations, and other small "c" conservative planks.

Booklet #3 treated "Law and Justice," with resolutions on senate reform, punishment and rehabilitation, family and day care. Booklet #4 concluded the round of proposals with items on "Government and Social Services" — items such as the senate, civil service, the post office, national health care, AIDS and education.

Pressure of time

How did the delegates feel about the process of deliberation?

Floyd Van Pelt (Elgin, Ont.) said that some of the resolutions were "too general and lacked finesse." Yet, he felt that the organizers had "done a super job" to prepare all the material for the delegates.

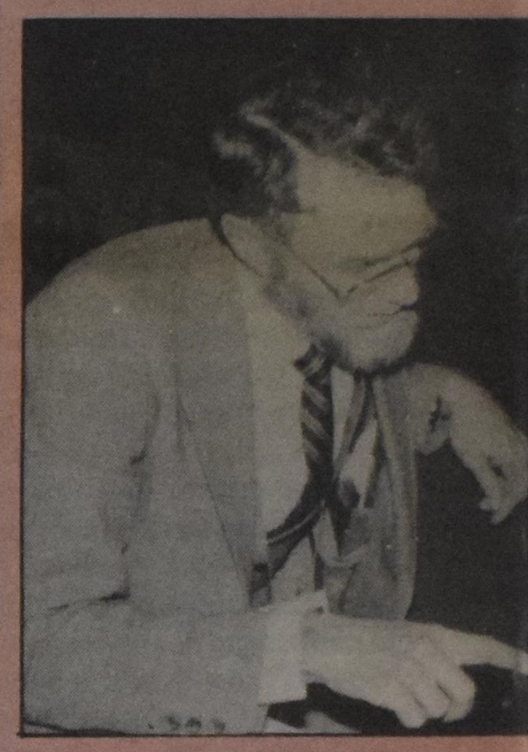
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Hogeterp of Hans, Nova Scotia, said they did not profess to understand all the resolutions but were happy to be there "to catch the spirit of the convention."

Jake Oosterhof (Lincoln, Ont.) felt that he had not received all the material early enough before the convention to study it thoroughly, but said that the moral issues were the most important ones for him.

Bill Nieboer (Lethbridge, Alta.) felt that one of the shortcomings of the event was the lack of time to debate resolutions thoroughly, but he thought that the process was going remarkably well. He was happy about the senate reform resolution, which would give outlying regions better representation.

Two delegates from Nova Scotia, Joseph MacDonald and William Mills, said they had no difficulty following the debate. They were well-prepared, having had enough time to study the material. Mills felt particularly good about policies like the one requiring the government to quarantine people suffering from AIDS. Although he too felt that there was not enough time for debate, "main-line parties do a lot worse in that area," he asserted.

According to MacDonald, some of the delegates were opposed to the fact that the policy part of the convention was closed to the public. "The majority voted in favour [of a closed session] but they don't seem to understand that a party has to operate in public in Canada. It'll be a fight at the next convention," he predicted.



Two key people in the setting of policy becoming provinces, reach agreement r.: Jacob De Raadt, lone representativ barrister from Calgary. DeRaadt had how, up till the 1980s, entrance into co accordance with the Constitution Act decision of Ottawa. With the Charter closed with a formula that required the the population of Canada to approve the closed door by demanding unanim provinces. Hurd and DeRaadt formed back to the formula of 1871.

Non-central perspective

One thing that stands out about the CHP is that both the national executive and the national policy committee are made up of people from southern British Columbia, mostly Surrey. That's where the party originated, with people like Bill Stilwell, president of the party, and Ed Vanwoudenberg, leader of the party. The chairman of the

policy committee, Dan Moreau, completes the Surrey connection.

This Western concentration, made necessary for practical reasons, has, at least, the advantage of preventing an Ontario-slanted vision. In the party's proposals for senate reform and for allowing the Yukon and the Northwest Territories to gain the status of provincehood, there is a clear recognition of the rights of the minorities.

What made the convention somewhat unbalanced again was the predominance of Ontario delegates. Most of the membership and riding associations of the CHP are in Ontario. But this strength was redoubled by the fact that Ontario delegates could more easily attend the Hamilton convention.

It seemed too, and was confirmed by Ed VanWoudenberg, that outlying regions like the Maritimes and the West, have been more successful in bringing a variety of church backgrounds into the membership. Ontario ridings, with fairly heavy concentrations of Reformed denominations, tended to be represented mostly by delegates with Dutch names.

Promising signs

A hopeful note for the party has to be that so many young or younger people could be counted among the delegations. Convention chairman Ray Pennings, was reported to be only 21 years old! Two members of the Coalition of Concerned Citizens of New Zealand, who had been invited to attend as observers, took envious note of this youthful factor in the CHP.

The first convention behind them, the CHP hopes to field between 55 to 60 candidates in the next federal election, according to Bert Vane, Constituency Director. At the moment there are between 75 to 80 riding committees. "We're building our party and we're looking for good candidates," said Vane. He indicated that several people have shown a willingness to run in the next election, which is expected to come within the next two years.

One could definitely sense an atmosphere of enthusiasm and dedication among the delegates. Many of them had come at substantial sacrifice of time and money. They were disturbed about the erosion of morals, patriotism and Christian heritage in Canada. Part of their action was a protest against the direction the main-line parties are taking the country.

A vision for Canada

The climax of the three-day event came when more than 1,500 delegates and friends met in Hamilton Place for an evening of celebration. They heard Ed VanWoudenberg deliver his key-note address. VanWoudenberg's work as Interim Leader of the party had been confirmed when he was elected leader at the convention and when the audience gave him a standing ovation.

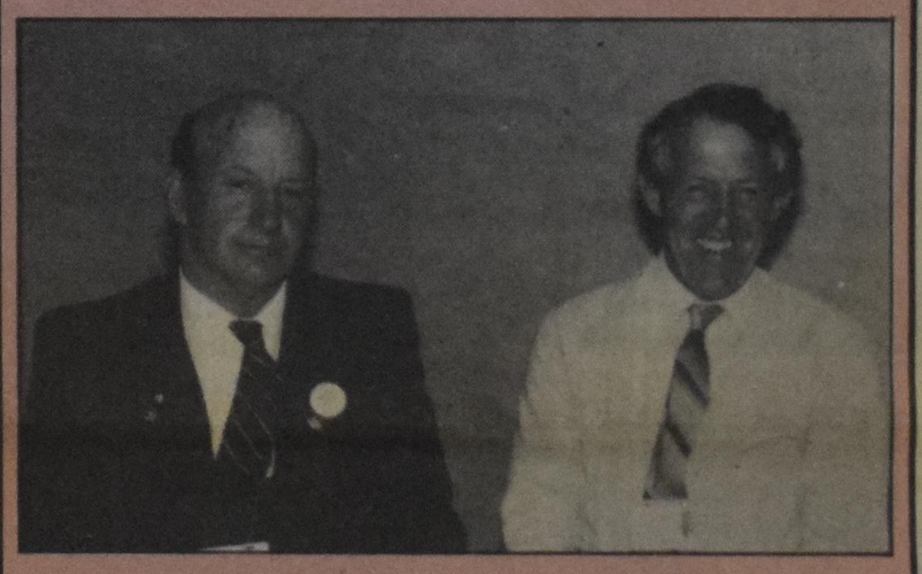
VanWoudenberg spoke of his vision for Canada, "a nation under God, which offers stability and security to all its citizens."

In a special ceremony that Friday evening, Rev. H. DeBolster, President of Redeemer College, inaugurated the leader and officers of the party. With gusto the audience sang the "Heritage Song," which musician Leendert Kooy had specially prepared for the convention: "This is a Christian country, let's aim to keep that true."

Photos: Bert Witvoet

Three delegates from Nova Scotia, from l. to r.: Clive Burrows, William Mills, Joseph MacDonald. When asked whether Canada is a Christian country, they replied, "You have to think positively" (Burrows); "It's a post-Christian, pluralistic nation" (MacDonald); "It's a Christian nation on shaky legs." (Mills)

n the matter of Yukon and Territories n policy during coffeebreak. From l. to rom the Yukon, and Larry D. Hurd, ven the delegates an historical lesson in ederation as a province had, in 1871, been dependent only on the Rights, the door had practically been ajority of provinces with a majority of well. The Meech Lake agreement bolted us approval from Ottawa and the policy that would urge Canada to go



Rob Eatwell (l) and Larry Pigou of the Coalition of Concerned Citizens of New Zealand attended the convention as observers. They remarked on how similar the social and political conditions were in both countries. They noted the same "liberal arrogance" in the media here as in New Zealand. The coalition of which they are members bring to the attention of the people of New Zealand laws passed by the government. Pigou explained that a few years ago the government of New Zealand passed a homosexual reforms bill, even though 800,000 people had signed a petition against it. With only a population of 3,500,000, this constituted the largest petition ever held in N.Z. Pigou did wonder about the heavy "church overtones" he had noticed in material from the CHP. "In New Zealand we would not be able to achieve a broad enough support base with such an emphasis," he said. He said that he felt very much part of the family here, and that he and others wanted the CHP to succeed.

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Christian economics: finding our way

... continued from page 9.

As is the case with capitalism, socialism can be adopted by Christians at the expense of Christianity. As Harry Antonides documents in his book *Stones For Bread*, Christian social and political intentions often become gradually more secularized. Christianity can easily become focused exclusively on the attitude of "love thy neighbour," instead of focusing on Christ, the Redeemer. So while some degree of socialism is often necessary to provide social justice, it is by no means a total answer.

Take action

Economics is not limited to two problematic solutions — capitalism and socialism. We must also realize that in the midst of the inconsistencies of economics there is hope.

There are steps we can take and clear-cut issues we can speak out on. Such issues include the present lack of government funding for independent schools, Sunday shopping, the often exorbitant costs of sports stadiums, including Expo and Olympic facilities, and the millions of dollars of government money that is poorly invested in a cabinet minister's riding while impoverished ridings of opposition candidates go empty-handed.

As we grow in economic awareness, we will be better able to grasp the issues behind government spending. We will be able to evaluate when, for instance, the government is "trimming the fat" and when the "trimming" means cutting out essential social services. There is a place where anyone can begin social and political action. Keeping our MPs and MLA's addresses on our refrigerator doors can serve to remind us to write them concerning, for example, three issues per year. We can also raise and support issues and causes in church "cell" and "household" groups or join a Christian political activist group such as Citizens for Public Justice.

The bottom line is that we must dramatically demonstrate God's concern for the poor and oppressed. We are not only called to do this one-on-one or through Christian charities, but also by working to change unjust structures and the government's role in those structures. If we try, we can indeed find our way through the often shrill and strident voices of the economic "wilderness."

Dean McRae is a security guard in Oshawa, Ont., and a member of Zion Chr. Ref. Church.

A warming thought as temperatures drop

TORONTO, Ont. (Canadian Scene) — More than a million caribou range the tundra and taiga of northern Canada and Alaska. These animals are hunted for their meat, but their hair is usually discarded. University of Guelph professor of consumer studies, Keith Slater, says he would like to change that. He has tested samples of caribou hair to see if it can be developed as a textile and possibly as the basis of a commercial production line in the Canadian Arctic.

Slater's study of caribou hair was initiated at the request of Robin Goodfellow, a freelance radio broadcaster who has lived in the north and learned about caribou from the local people. Goodfellow provided knitted, felted and woven samples of a caribou and sheep's wool blend, which Slater tested for strength, thickness, and thermal and abrasion resistance.

He discovered that the blend is stable, lightweight and warm, only slightly inferior to pure wool in strength and abrasion and superior in thickness and thermal resistance.

Goodfellow has talked to people at the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and Development and the government of the Northwest Territories about initiating commercial production of cloth made from caribou hair and wool. The biggest problem to be overcome, says Slater, is the cost of transporting sheep's wool to the Arctic.

Money talks

BURLINGTON, Ont. (CRWRC) — Disaster relief funds totalling $40,000 from the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) will help pay costs for disaster response volunteers working during the next year in Whittier, California, and Elmhurst, Illinois. Early October earthquakes damaged more than 1,500 family dwellings in Whittier. August flooding in Elmhurst affected homes of about 100 families. In both areas, CRWRC is working with local CRC deacon conferences to aid the victims.

Don't take aging "sitting down" says biologist

(Canadian Scene) — We all get older, but too many of us help the aging process along by assuming that elderly bodies are useless, says University of Guelph professor Susan Pfeiffer. As a human biologist, Pfeiffer rejects that mental image and suggests that something as simple as a daily walk around the block can help us to maintain control of both our physical and mental abilities.

Regardless of chronological age, an obese, inactive body will suffer symptoms similar to those common to a prolonged life span, says Pfeiffer. A decrease in physical strength and stamina, poor circulation, high blood pressure and low glucose tolerance are just a few of those functions that are "almost always" affected by aging and can become symptoms of physical inactivity at any age.

Reaction time, memory, social ability and some aspects of intelligence can be added to the list and can be affected positively by exercise and improved physical conditioning, she says.

Pfeiffer's advice is simple: "Use it or lose it." She recommends walking as the best overall exercise for most older people, but if you're hesitant, ask your doctor to prescribe a light exercise program that incorporates an aerobic activity.

Swinging your arms in a nice brisk walk instead of watching TV can help to prevent stiffened shoulders that make it difficult to do simple chores like fixing your hair, she says. It can also build confidence and help you stay in control of your body and your lifestyle. If you know you can walk around the block without difficulty, you won't hesitate to catch the bus to go downtown shopping or to a show.

Physical fitness, coupled with good nutrition, can also eliminate many of the non-prescription drugs that leave older people with the idea that they are ill, says Pfeiffer.

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Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til

Nuts

Rated AA
Stars Barbra Streisand, Richard Dreyfuss, Maureen Stapleton, Eli Wallach, Robert Webber, James Whitmore, Karl Malden
From the play by Tom Topor
Directed by Martin Ritt; produced by Barbra Streisand

Claudia Faith Draper (Barbra Streisand) has been accused of manslaughter. We meet her in a holding cell. A few moments later, in court, one of the first things we see her do is incapacitate her family-hired, celebrity lawyer with a well-placed kick. We soon find out why she feels that strongly about things.

Claudia's guilt or innocence is not the issue. We are, in fact, allowed to witness the murder and the circumstances which precipitated it. The film's subject lies elsewhere: Claudia's well-heeled parents don't want her (read: *their* family name) to be dragged down by a murder trial or a jail term. So they want her declared mentally incompetent. They'd rather have her do time in a mental hospital than a prison.

Claudia is an angry, irritating, but hurting woman who exhibits both verbal crudeness and mental sophistication. But is she "nuts?" She knows she's not. Aaron Levinsky, her court-appointed replacement lawyer, says, "I got an aunt in Long Island who's crazier than [Claudia] is. She's president of the PTA." Her parents know too — and so do we.

So Claudia's "sanity" is no surprise; nor, really, is the film's depiction of the kind of childhood she experienced which led her to hate her parents and reject their upper class values, becoming a high-priced call girl.

A certain predictability, however, does not ruin the emotional impact of this film. Part of that impact comes from its dealing frankly with difficult subjects (though admittedly in a way that's not too hardhitting to be acceptable to Hollywood).

The other impact comes from a whole castful of excellent performers — all deservedly well-known actors. But Streisand and Dreyfuss are exhilarating. (Barbra Streisand has a reputation for being difficult and narcissistic; one suspects that reputation is somewhat undeserved. This role requires more intelligence than glamour.) Streisand and Dreyfuss are a captivating and volatile on-screen pair. Fortunately, the movie doesn't succumb to developing the expected romantic link between the two. That makes these interchanges between the two even better. They are real, witty, often infuriated, occasionally tender, at times crude exchanges between an abused but articulate woman who wants to be allowed to accept culpability for her crime (and thus be considered "normal") and a quick-witted but exasperated man who wants to make sure she's allowed to see justice.

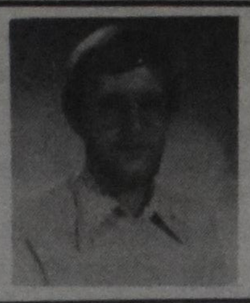
This is a well-made film that presents a strong but troubled woman who must finally deal with the abuse of her past. Its broader significance lies in the justice system's questioning of her sanity and upholding of her rights.

Doomed animal makes a comeback

Marcus Van Steen

(Canadian Scene) — An animal that was almost wiped out in most parts of Canada more than a century ago is being brought back.

The fisher, a six-pound, two-foot-long carnivorous animal related to the mink — fell victim to the destruction of its natural forest environment, and to trappers eager to get its luxurious pelt. Its range once extended in the treed area from the Maritimes to British Columbia but it managed to survive naturally only in British Columbia. However, with the assistance of the forestry and natural resources departments of provincial governments, it has now been restored to the forests of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Ontario.



MEDIA SCAN

Henry Knoop

Of roller coasters and horror movies

I'm not a great fan of roller coasters anymore. Last summer when I made my first visit to Canada's Wonderland with a carload of adolescents, it took a bit of coaxing to join them for a few rides. Gone are the days when I fearlessly(?) rose to the challenge of whatever Edmonton's Klondike Days (my hometown's exhibition) could mount for me. Gone is the need for proving to others (and to myself) that I am not afraid. Gone is the fear of admitting that sometimes I *am* afraid and have no desire to ride "The Bat" or some other manic pleasure ride.

My (almost) middle-aged sensibility now tells me that roller coasters are but a cheap thrill, perhaps fun to ride on occasion, but nothing I would go out of my way or pay a lot of money for. Why this discourse on roller coasters?

For a while now I have listened to teenagers as they highlighted again and again the gruesome details of a horror movie they had seen, usually on video. I am appalled, first of all, by what they consider to be "harmless" entertainment. *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* is tame stuff compared to some other movies often viewed. "Jason" of *Halloween* fame is alive and well, not only in movie theatres where he and his deranged colleagues rake in thousands of dollars exploiting a teenage market thrilled with his exploits, but also in grade schools and high schools around the country.

Just a big laugh

"It's just a big laugh!" is the common response I get to my query on why teenagers like to watch horror movies. "You don't take it seriously!"

"But I take it seriously," I respond. "How can you enjoy watching someone get mutilated on screen? Aren't you celebrating crime and violence?"

"Oh, that. That's so phoney. Everyone knows no one really gets killed or maimed. Watching a horror movie is like taking a roller coaster ride. It's the thrill of getting *scared*!"

The thrill of getting scared. I had to think about that one for a while. Was I getting so old that I couldn't remember my desire for "thrills?" Were kids today different than when I grew up? Was this something unnatural? Was this something unhealthy?

Kids today are, of course, no different than when I was young, and there is nothing unnatural or unhealthy about adolescents wanting to "test their limits," to determine just how much they can take. In that regard, I think every teenager should be riding roller coasters.

Yet having said that, the *avenue* in which kids are testing their limits, in the form of popular horror movies today, is undoubtedly unhealthy and a cause for concern. Most of the current offerings in this genre are little more than exploitation films trivializing serious psychological disorders and social problems of our society. Their graphic depiction of violence and brutality glorifies an abnormal response to life's frustrations. In addition, many horror films do more than a little dabbling in the dangerous world of the occult.

In so doing, they *exploit* an audience struggling to cope in an ever more violent, turbulent, 20th century Western society. How often haven't we read in our newspapers or seen on television news broadcasts accounts of rape, murder and other vicious crimes? How often haven't we put ourselves in the victim's place, and thanked God for keeping us (and our families) safe? Most horror movies today play upon that natural "it could have happened to me" response.

Desensitized to violence

The result, however, is anything but healthy. Through constant exposure to horror, an audience becomes desensitized to it. Instead of increasing our concern and emotion for the victims of these crimes, we become deadened to the plight of others and thank God that nothing happened to *us*. Or we laugh, as teenagers do, perhaps to cover up our real emotions; but probably more often because we don't know, and aren't taught, how to deal with what we are seeing. Horror movies are but another manifestation of an individualistic, me-centred society.

What about "catharsis," the view that horror movies provide an outlet for our pent-up emotions, thus "purging" the audience of any violent tendencies? "Better on the screen than on the street" is the rationale. Won't audience members just express their innate "violence" in other forms if you remove this one?

But where, in this view, is the Christian struggle with sin and battling the "old nature," as scripture talks of it? Is it not just another indication of our self-centredness, our giving in to our sinful nature?

I think little can be said to justify the legitimacy of horror movies for us today. Adolescents have to be steered to more acceptable, healthy, ways of "testing their limits." Many non-horror movies employ a legitimate tool of suspense — that "sitting on the edge of your seat" quality which can gratify natural desires of involvement. But modern horror movies are one roller coaster ride our society can do without.

Henry Knoop teaches English and media studies at Durham Christian High School, Bowmanville, Ontario.

Izaak de Rijcke, B.Sc., LL.B., O.L.S.
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Classifieds

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DE JONG: We wish all our family and friends a joyful Christmas and God's blessings for 1988.
Mr. and Mrs. Kornelis De Jong, R.R.#1, Morrisburg, Ont.

GUETTER: We'd like to wish our families and friends a blessed Christmas and the Lord's peace and his guidance for the New Year.
Mr. and Mrs. John Guetter, Sr., Clinton, Ont.

MAAS: Matthijs and Nelly wish all our family and friends a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.
4 Palm Dr., Lake Worth, FL 33461

PASMA: We wish all our relatives and friends a most joyous and blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.
George and Alice Pasma, 263 Clark Rd., London, ON N5W 5E7

RUMPH: We wish all our children, grandchildren, family and friends a blessed Christmas and God's peace in the New Year.
Mr. and Mrs. Thys Rumph, R.R.#1, Alma, Ont.

VAN MARRUM: Peter and Dora Van Marrum wish family and friends a very joyful and meaningful Christmas and a blessed New Year.
7570 46th Ave. N., Lot 349, St. Petersburg, FL 33709

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Notes of thanks	$21.00
Birthdays	$20.00

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NOTE: Newlyweds whose wedding announcement with their future address appears in Calvinist Contact will receive a letter offering a first-year subscription for only $10! To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request and pay for the wedding announcement to enclose $10 and the couple's future address.

Note our new address: Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd., 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9

Birthdays

DE GROOT: Thankful to the Lord, our father, grandfather and great-grandfather,

Mr. MENNO DE GROOT

hopes to celebrate his 80th birthday on Dec. 31, 1987, D.V. Those wishing to extend congratulations are invited to an open house on Jan. 1, 1988, from 2-4 p.m., at the Burlington Lawn Bowling Club, 2269 New St., Burlington (behind old arena).
Home address: c/o 1666 Missenden Cresc., Mississauga, ON L5J 2T4

Anniversaries

1962 December 14 1987
"Therefore take the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." (Ephesians 6:13)
With thankfulness to God, we wish to announce the 25th wedding anniversary of,

WARNER and BETSY BOER
(nee Buesink)

Their loving and thankful children:
Harry
Jeff & Jayne (girlfriend)
Robert
Jonathan
Home address: 26 Elm St., Simcoe, ON N3Y 3B3

1942 December 23 1987
With all praise and thanksgiving to our heavenly Father, we hope to celebrate, the Lord willing, with our parents and grandparents, 45 years of marriage.

WOBBE and PIETJE BYLSMA

We pray the Lord will continue to bless them in the years to come.
With love and congratulations from your children and grandchildren:
Theresa & Jim Brand — Dashwood
Marsha, Jamie, Tracy, Jennifer, Christine
Auke & Chris Bylsma — Blyth
Karen, Sheila, Adam, Vicki, Jeffrey
Wibbina & Gerald Toonk — Exeter
Angela, Kimberly, Debra
John & Ruby Bylsma — Blyth
Mark, David, Rachel, Beth, Matthew
Anne & Terry Kaastra — Clinton
Michael, Bryan, Allan, Shaun
Cory & John Kuipers — Goderich
Charleen, Pamela, Jodi
Pat Bylsma — Clinton
Home address: R.R.#1, Blyth, ON N0M 1H0

Obituaries

Mar. 23, 1949 Nov. 17, 1987
"... and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." (Psalm 23)
On Nov. 17, 1987, the Lord in his infinite wisdom took home his faithful child after a courageous battle with cancer,

ALLEN PRANGER

age 38.
Beloved husband of Betty Pranger (nee Hartholt).
Loving father of:
Kimberly
Pamela
Diana
Kristy
Carolyn
Michael
Dear son of Jantje Pranger (nee Westra).
Predeceased July 1987 by his father, Gerke Pranger.
Dear brother/brother-in-law of:
Helen & Hank Hogeveen
Susan & Sid Jansen
Gus & Barbara Pranger
Janette Pranger
Mailing address: J. Pranger, 16 Trillium Ave., Nepean, ON K2E 5M9

Wanted

Olds-Didsbury Fellowship
Do you live in Olds, or Didsbury, Alberta, or area? Are you Reformed? (e.g. Christian Reformed)
Are you interested in contact among Reformed believers in that area? Start a fellowship group perhaps? Then contact Pastor William (VanderBeek) at the CR Church of Red Deer, Alta., 16 McVicar St., T4N 5H3 or call 346-5659 (office) or 346-3961 (home). Church councils, inform us of members who live there?

Anniversaries

Aalten (Geld.) Sauble Beach
1938 1988
"If your presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here." (Exodus 33:15)
Having experienced God's faithfulness in their lives, we, the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of,

JAN WILLEM and SARA DUTHLER
(nee Den Hamer)

rejoice and give thanks to God that we may celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary, the Lord willing, on Jan. 6, 1988.
Bill & Henny Duthler — Hamilton
Connie & Jeff De Ruiter
John
Henry
Sarie Brouwer Duthler — Salem
Sara & Michael Zaharie
Gary & Robbin Brouwer
Lisa
George & Alice De Vries — Edmonton
Michael
Anita & Derrick Vanden Berg
Robert
Phillip
Wayne
Monique
Hank & Audrey Boer — Niagara-on-the Lake
Tamara & Ken Plugers; Nathan, Jordan
Darrell
Thalia
Michelle
Rachel
Duane
Gary & Drika Duthler — Edmonton
Adriana & Bennett Woudstra
Sara
Daniel
Tony
Selikke
Ben & Jeannette Vander Lugt — Dorchester
Sharon
Peter
Stephen
A reception will be held in their honour for family and friends on July 10, 1988, in Owen Sound.
Winter mailing address: 3104 Broadway, Brentwood Park, Space 9, Mesa, Arizona 85203

Miscellaneous

Durham Region Right to Life Association has audio and video materials as well as speakers available for students, teachers, clubs and churches, etc. For info. (416) 668-7911.

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$500 ___ Other ___ Thank you!

Anniversaries

To God be the glory.
Springdale Brampton
1953 January 2 1988
It is with great thankfulness to our heavenly Father, for his goodness and faithfulness shown to us, that we,

LOUIS and THERESA MOLENHUIS
(nee Dryfhout)

together with our children and grandchildren hope to celebrate our 35th wedding anniversary.
John 15:17
Al Molenhuis & Lisa — Toronto
Jim & Coby Molenhuis — Bradford
Sarah, Michael, Erik
Sid & Teresa Molenhuis — Brampton
Daniel, David
Liz & Joe Busuttil — Burlington
Stephanie, Adrian
Louis & Debbie Molenhuis — Brampton
Derrick
Marg & Harry Vander Voet — Burlington
Reanne, Andrew
Home address: 53 Church St., E., #601, Brampton, ON L6V 1G2

Rotterdam Rexdale
1942 December 23 1987
Congratulations to our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents,

LEEN and ADRIE ZWAAL
(nee Belder)

on their 45th wedding anniversary.
We pray that God will bless you in the future as He has done in the past.
Congratulations and all our love:
Ingrid VanderVinne;
Tim & Yvonne Johnston; Justine
Melissa
Richard
Lennard
— Surrey, B.C.
Bruce & Ada Maas;
Miranda
Jennifer
Bruce
Amy
— Brampton, Ont.
Tina & George Whittle;
Matthew
Sarah
Rachel
Ian
— Rexdale, Ont.
Home address: 60 Irwin Rd., Rexdale, ON M9W 2P8

Obituaries

Once again our family was saddened when suddenly on Tues., Nov. 24, 1987, God welcomed unto himself our beloved husband, father and grandfather,

PETER LANGEVELD

at the age of 63, who was so precious to us, who gave us so much laughter and joy in life, who was a refuge and comfort to those in need and who by his quiet example taught and showed us how to be a child of the Lord and a soldier of the cross.
Husband of Alice Langeveld (nee Van Galen).
Father and Opa of:
Enica & Art Tolsma; Alecia, John Paul, Nicole, James — Chatham
Jack & Marie Langeveld; Peter, Sherry, Christine — London
Wilma & Casper Saarloos; Pamela, Mason — Aylmer
Bill & Bonnie Langeveld; Billy
Walter (already with Jesus)
Sandra — at home
Dear uncle of many, but also as a father to:
Jack & Denise Langeveld
Henny & Ray Rabideau
Anthony Langeveld
Evelyn & Roger Hazzard
Peter Langeveld
Home address: 7 Masefield Cr., London, ON N5V 1M9

Anniversaries

Meppel, Dr. Newmarket, Ont.
1962 December 12 1987
"Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts." (I Cor. 14:1a)
With thankful hearts to God who brought them together, we are happy to announce the 25th wedding anniversary of our parents,

EGBERT and MARCHIENA
KLEIN-HORSMAN
(nee Torenbosch)

May God bless you and keep you for many more years to come.
With love from your children:
John
Joycegina
Edith
Albert
Marsha

Obituaries

Suddenly the Lord called to himself our nephew and cousin,

HARRY JOHN ROODE

of Woodstock, Ont., at the age of 29, on Saturday, Nov. 14, 1987.
Our hearts go out to his parents, brother and sisters and families.
Fondly remembered by:
John & Maria Koops — Woodstock
Ralph & Anne Koops — Cambridge
Hazel & Andrew Siderius — Brampton
Anne Houseman — Grand Rapids, Mich.
Wilma & Clarence Sol — Kitchener
Harry Koops — Grand Rapids, Mich.
and their families.
Funeral service was held on Tuesday, Nov. 17, at the Covenant Chr. Ref. Church, Woodstock, with Rev. R. Ouwehand officiating.
"Be still and know that I am God." (Ps. 46:10)

"Then I heard a voice from heaven say, write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'they will rest from their labour, for their deeds will follow them.' " (Revelation 14:13)
On Wednesday, Nov. 18, 1987, after a lengthy illness and much suffering, our loving heavenly Father called unto himself, his child,

TEA (Teatske) WESTERTERP
(nee Vriesema)

to begin her life of eternal joy and glory with him.
She was in her 83rd year.
Dearly beloved wife of Peter Westerterp and dearly beloved mother of:
Dick & Elanor Westerterp — London
John & Cynthia Westerterp — Belmont
Ann & Bob DeKraker — Springfield
Ben & Pat Westerterp — Springfield
Agnes & John DeGroot — Tillsonburg
Bertha & Louis Barnes — Woodstock
Thea Westerterp — St. Catharines
Peter & Lineke Westerterp — Hamilton
She was also the loving grandmother and great-grandmother of 20 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.
She filled our lives with so much love and joy and was a blessing to us all while she was with us; we rejoice in the knowledge that she is now "Safe in the arms of Jesus."
She will be sadly missed and always lovingly remembered.
The funeral service was held on Saturday, Nov. 21, 1987, at the Chr. Ref. Church in Aylmer. Officiating: Pastor Dr. Henry J. Boekhoven.
Home address: 86 Caverly Rd., Aylmer, ON N5H 2P4

Classifieds

Accommodations

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Kom terug naar Nederland. U kunt logeren aan de rand van Utrecht, F.150.00 per persoon per week. Inlichtingen: Mvr. Sneller, Pr. Irene Laan 53, Utrecht, or call G. Van Soelen (416) 454-1295 after 6 p.m.

For Sale

The Thunder Bay Christian School **25th Anniversary Book** is now available. Send your name, address, and a cheque for $10, payable to TBCS Anniversary Committee, to:

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Anniversary Committee
R.R.#2
Thunder Bay, ON P7C 4V1

For Rent

Room for rent in a basement apartment to be shared with two other males, Niagara area. Call (416) 562-4994.

For Rent

Two, possibly three, bedroom duplex in Aldershot/Burlington area. Available Jan. 1, 1988. Call (416) 522-5000 or 689-7480.

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Spacious room for rent in Brampton home. Suitable for non-smoking person. Call (416) 451-1342 for more information.

FLORIDA: apartment in adult park in Orlando; 1 bedroom, livingroom, kitchen, 2-piece bath with shower, own entrance and patio. All utilities included. $125 U.S. per week for one couple. Available immediately. Call: 1-305-886-0214.

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For more information, call or write:
Mrs. F. Smink
198 Terrace Drive, Hamilton, L9A 2Z1
phone 385-1949
or Mr. J. Jansen v. Doorn, phone 575-0476

Teachers

AYLMER: Immanuel Chr. School seeks applications from teachers interested in a possible part-time position in the **junior** area beginning early in 1988. Please send resume to the school, 75 Caverly Rd., Aylmer, ON N5H 2P6 or for more information call: Andy Vander Ploeg, Principal at (519) 773-8476 (school) or (519) 773-5009 (home).

COBOURG: Northumberland Chr. School will need an experienced teacher for the **primary grades,** beginning in September 1988. Send application and a statement of philosophy to: Mr. Henry Lise, Principal, R.R.#5, Cobourg, ON K9A 4J8. Ph. 416-372-8766. Consider joining a culturally aware community in a "school with a difference" that is 'child-oriented, teacher-directed, Christ-centred and community-supported.'

LUCKNOW: The Lucknow & District Christian School in Lucknow, Ont., has a possible opening for a **teaching-principal** for the 1988-89 school year. Please send all letters of inquiry and resumes to Mrs. Ettie Broer, Principal, Lucknow & District Christian School, Lucknow, ON N0G 2H0.

MISSISSAUGA: The John Knox Christian School Society of Mississauga, Ont., is accepting applications for a qualified part-time teacher to work 15 hours per week in a combination of various **primary levels** (jr. K. through Gr. 2) starting immediately. A commitment to the Reformed world and life view is necessary. Please contact: Lorna Keith, Principal at (416) 822-8131 or Anne Veeneman, Education Committee, at (416) 844-6454.

WOODSTOCK: For the 1988/89 school year, we will be in need of a **qualified, preferably experienced, special education teacher,** with proven organizational skills. Some regular classroom teaching (presently 20%) may be involved. Strengths in French and/or music will be desirable assets. We offer pleasant working conditions in up-to-date modern facilities. Direct your resume or inquiries to the principal, John Knox Chr. School, 800 Juliana Dr., P.O. Box 243, Woodstock, ON N4S 7W8. Phone: (519) 539-1492.

Classifieds continued next page.

Teachers

PRINCIPALSHIP
Vancouver Christian School Association is seeking candidates for Sept. 1988 for a **principal** for its secondary school. Applicants will be screened the week of Feb. 1. Send resumes to: Search Committee, Vancouver Chr. School Association, 3496 Haida Dr., Vancouver, BC V5M 3Z4. For information call: (604) 430-3062.

WASAGA BEACH: Required immediately, teacher for **Grade 7/8.** Submit resume to Silvercrest Chr. School, R.R.#1, Wasaga Beach, ON L0L 2P0. Tel: (705) 429-4303, after 6 p.m.: (705) 322-3125.

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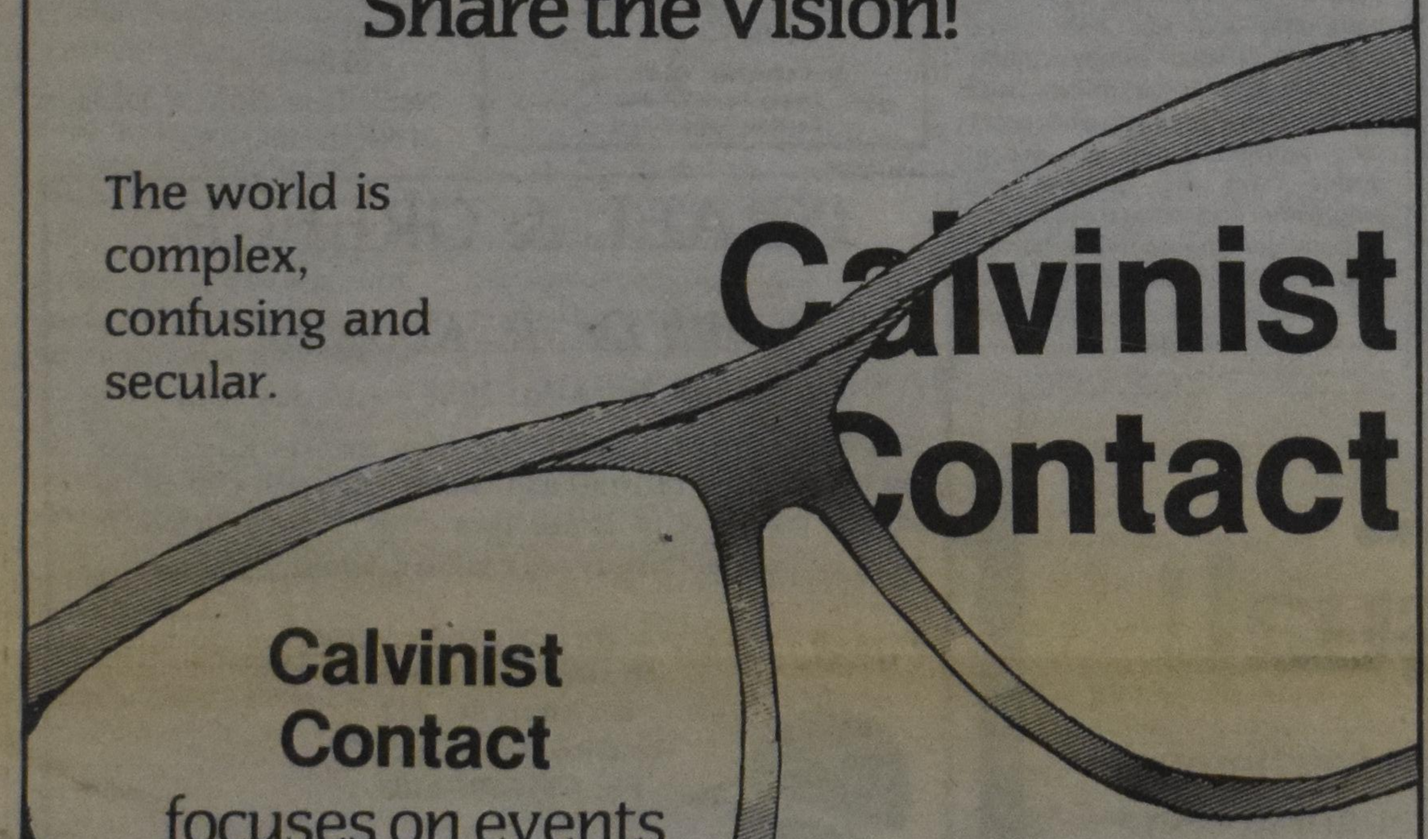

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4 Name (Please print) _____ Address _____ Postal Code _____

5 Name (Please print) _____ Address _____ Postal Code _____

6 Name (Please print) _____ Address _____ Postal Code _____

May we tell them you suggested their names? ☐ Yes ☐ No _____ Please print your name

Send to: **"Share the Vision,"** Calvinist Contact, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 6P9

The Calvin Christian Elementary School
in Chatham
invites applications for the position of a

PRINCIPAL

Our school consists of about 210 students and 14 both full- and part-time teachers. We require a person who has biblical insight, sound Christian perspective and proven teaching ability, and who is able to give sensitive leadership to a dedicated staff and supportive community.

Please submit application and resume to:
Mr. M. VanLingen, Principal
72 Tissiman Ave., Chatham, ON N7M 4G5
School telephone: (519) 352-4980

Classifieds/Events

Help Wanted

Help wanted on **dairy** farm. Must have knowledge of cattle and general farm work. Reply with past experience to: Allard Colyn, R.R.#1, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

Help Wanted

Help wanted on modern **farrow to finish hog** farm. Good wages and pleasant working conditions. House available. For further information phone Ron at (519) 529-7697.

Help Wanted

Dairy farm in the Niagara Peninsula requires full-time person beginning January 1988. Year-round employment; room and board provided. Salary commensurate with experience. Call (416) 774-3721.

Large modern dairy farm in Eastern Ontario has a vacancy for a **herdsperson** to milk in computerized facilities and supervised total herd care, or will train a self-motivated person. One-half mile from village and minutes from Chr. Ref. Church, Christian and public schools, shopping and recreational facilities. Three-bedroom house available on the farm. Salary, holidays and weekends off to be discussed. Apply with resume to: Zandbergen Farms Ltd., Attention: Bill Zandbergen, R.R.#2, Brinston, ON K0E 1C0. Phone: (613) 652-2243.

Mutual Support Systems invites you to consider an opportunity for service in a Christ-centred program for children, ages 9-18, with emotional and behavioural problems. This family model program has three homes with house-parent couples and child-care workers living in, except during days off. Couples and single men and women are invited to consider and apply to: Mutual Support Systems, R.R.#1, Perry Rd., Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0. Phone: (416) 386-6461.

Help Wanted

Wanted: reliable, experienced **herdsman** for modern dairy farm (190 cows) in Nova Scotia. Housing provided. Excellent salary for the right person. Serious inquiries only. Call: 1-902-758-2644 or write to: Bokma Farms Ltd., R.R.#1, Shubenacadie, Hants County, NS B0N 2H0

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Miscellaneous

Church news

Christian Reformed Church

New clerk

— Immanuel CRC, Cornwall, Ont.: John Oosterheerd, 1312 Churchill St., Cornwall, ON K6V 4Y2.

— Community CRC of Meadowvale, Mississauga, Ont.: Len Van Harten, c/o the church, 2630 Inlake Court, Mississauga, ON L5N 2A7

New secretary of deacons

— Community CRC of Meadowvale, Mississauga, Ont.: Stanley Paul, c/o the church, 2630 Inlake Court, Mississauga, ON L5N 2A7

Canadian Reformed Church

Called

— to Chilliwack, B.C., Rev. E. Kampen of Houston, B.C.

Accepted

— to Berkum, The Netherlands, Rev. A. De Jager of Neerlandia, Alta.

A New Creation

Renewal in Christ's Church

A report prepared for Classes Hamilton and Niagara of the Christian Reformed Church by "The Task Force for Renewal": Rev. Jack Quartel, Chairman
Rev. Richard Stienstra
Rev. Jack Vos, Reporter
Dr. Jack Zeyl

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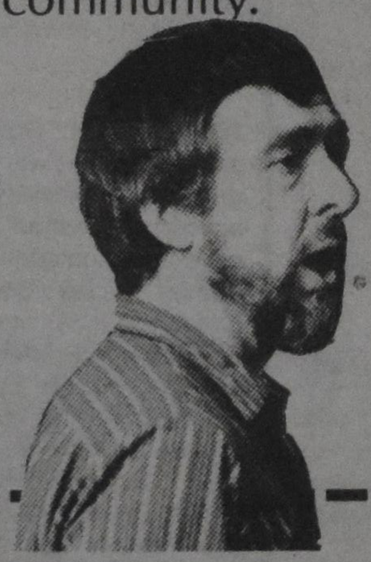

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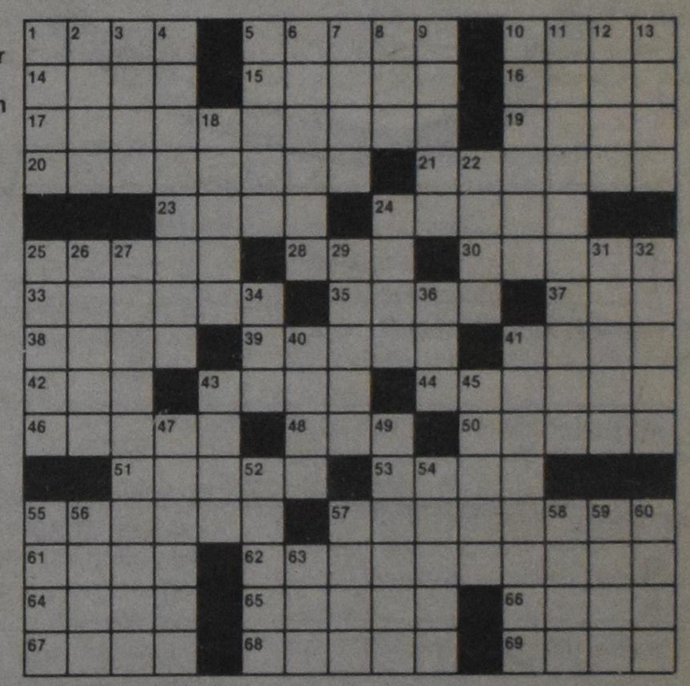
Weekly Crossword

by Bernice Gordon



ACROSS
1 Road shoulder
5 Fr. river
10 Icelandic poem collection
14 — da capo
15 Pungent bulb
16 Boor
17 Wasteful activity
19 Play the coquette
20 Fred & Adele
21 Water motion
23 Celt
24 Seoul's land
25 Wystan Hugh —
28 — Na Na
30 Totted up
33 Night sounds
35 Solar disc
37 Actress Joanne
38 Gourmands
39 Used a crowbar
41 Kind of gin
42 Common abbr.
43 Tightly pulled
44 Loathe
46 Under poetically
48 Railroad beam
50 Scratches out
51 Abut
53 Writer Earl — Biggers
55 Blame
57 Facsimile
61 "Cowardly Lion"
62 Certain necklaces
64 Athos' weapon
65 Extremely pale
66 NC college
67 Amusing chap
68 Understands
69 Cat's-paw

DOWN
1 Rum-soaked cake
2 Cupid
3 Profusion
4 Supervisors
5 Henry or Roger
6 Calif. pros
7 Arranges
8 —-pros
9 January: Sp.
10 Went to Gretna Green
11 Swims like a baby
12 Boring
13 Suit to —
18 Film's Keaton
22 Khomeini's country
24 "Kiss Me, —"
25 Colo. ski resort
26 Wed or weld
27 City employee
29 Former home of Duvalier
31 Eaten away
32 Songs for two
34 Health resort
36 Byrnes of TV
40 Dr. — (sex authority)
41 Astonished
43 For example
45 Flynn of films
47 Took a trip
49 Brought out
52 — Rapids, Mich.
54 Short jackets
55 Sir Guinness
56 —-pie (from head to foot)
57 Turk. VIP
58 Asian river
59 Stage item
60 Ancient slave
63 Sugar suffix

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Last Week's Puzzle

H	E	N	S	■	S	A	Y	E	R	■	A	H	A	B
A	S	I	A	■	C	L	O	S	E	■	L	U	L	U
W	A	N	D	E	R	L	U	S	T	■	U	L	A	N
N	U	A	N	C	E	■	■	E	A	R	M	A	R	K
■	■	■	E	R	A	S	E	■	I	O	N	■	■	■
C	O	N	S	U	M	E	R	■	L	O	I	T	E	R
A	V	I	S	■	■	N	I	N	E	S	■	O	D	E
R	I	M	■	D	E	S	S	E	R	T	■	R	E	T
O	N	E	■	A	R	E	T	E	■	■	P	I	N	E
B	E	S	T	I	R	■	I	D	E	A	L	I	S	M
■	■	■	O	R	A	■	C	Y	M	R	Y	■	■	■
A	N	O	D	Y	N	E	■	■	B	Y	W	O	R	D
L	O	R	D	■	T	R	A	V	E	L	O	G	U	E
O	V	A	L	■	L	I	V	I	D	■	O	L	L	A
W	A	L	E	■	Y	E	A	N	S	■	D	E	E	R

Events/News

Canadians invest in American business

Robert VanderVennen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Investment by Canadians in U.S. business receives less attention than American investment in Canada, but surprisingly, it is massive, says David R. Francis in a recent article in *The Christian Science Monitor*.

Since 1978 Canadian investments overseas have averaged about $3.5 billion each year, with two-thirds going to the U.S. Investment in the U.S. has grown from about $5 million in 1975 to over $25-billion in 1985. More than 527,600 workers are employed in the U.S. in companies owned by Canadians.

The book value of Canadian investment in the U.S. is about 60 per cent as large as American investment in Canadian business. Canadian investment receives far less public attention because it results in a far smaller percentage of ownership of American business than does U.S. ownership of Canadian business.

Canadian export of business capital is in part a sign of the maturing of the Canadian economy, says Prudential-Bache Securities in a study of the Canadian economy. It also shows that the economics of Canada and the United States are becoming increasingly integrated, even apart from the current free trade negotiations.

Gutenberg Bible brings $5.39 million

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP) — A Gutenberg Bible, printed in 1455 in Mainz, Germany, was sold at an auction Oct. 22 for more than twice the record price for a printed book. The Bible is one of 48 surviving of the 185 believed to have been printed partly by Johannes Gutenberg.

Johannes Gutenberg, a German printer who was born sometime around 1400, is credited with inventing the first printing press with moveable type. The Gutenberg Bibles were the first books printed from his presses and paved the way for mass communication. The Bibles, the first large books printed on the press, were an edition of the Vulgate.

The Gutenberg Bible is in pristine condition, according to Christie's auction house, in charge of the auction of more than 130 printed books from the 15th century. The pages are clean, and are bound in their original binding. The Bible is the first volume of a two volume set, and includes Genesis through Psalms of the Old Testament. The second volume in the set is not believed to have survived.

The buyer was Maruzen Co. Ltd. of Tokyo, Japan's largest bookseller, who paid $5.39 million for the Bible. The previous record price for a printed book sold at auction was $2.2 million when another Gutenberg Bible was sold in 1978.

All 130 books were collected and donated to the Catholic church, seminaries, and other charities by the late Estelle Doheny, wife of the late California oil king Edward Doheny. The archdiocese is selling the books to fund a program to increase enrolment in Catholic seminaries.

Homosexual sentenced for spreading AIDS

NUREMBERG, Germany (EP) — A judge sentenced a former U.S. Army cook to two years in prison recently for practising unprotected homosexual sex although he was aware that he carried the AIDS virus.

The judge said that the right to freedom from injury must be considered higher than the right to free sexual practice.

The law under which he was charged prohibits causing bodily harm with a weapon or "dangerous treatment," a term normally used in cases of poisons. Although the evidence uncovered during the nine-day trial did not prove that the man had infected any of several sex partners, the judge ruled that he had, in effect, threatened them with grievous injury.

Annual

Candlelight Service

with the

Adoramus-Maranatha Choir

John Hunse — Director
Hazel Snyder — Accompanist
Monica Admiral — Accompanist

Dec. 20, 1987
7:30 p.m.
York CRC

Dec. 23, 1987
8:00 p.m.
Mt. Hamilton CRC

Calendar of Events

Dec. 12	A Christmas organ and choir concert with special guest organist Andre Knevel in Dundas Street Centre United Church, 482 Dundas St., **London,** Ont., at 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	Handel's "Messiah" presented by Chatham's "Laudate Dominum Choir" at 8 p.m. at Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont. Proceeds for Redeemer's organ fund.
Dec. 12	Join the Mountainview Singers in celebrating Christmas 8 p.m., Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby.** Sing all your favourite Christmas carols. The choir will perform Dale Grootenhuis' Christmas cantata "Glad Tidings." Solo sung by Mr. Harold de Haan. Free will offering.
Dec. 18	Christian choir, New Life, Christmas concert at 8 p.m., Maranatha CRC, 301 Scott St., **St. Catharines.** Free will offering.
Dec. 19	Christmas concert at 8 p.m. in Trinity United Church (Church & Division), **Bowmanville,** Ont., by Leendert Kooij's O.C.M.A. with Andre Knevel at the organ.
Dec. 20	Combined Christmas concert by the Brampton Chr. Choral Society "Praise the Lord" (Wm. Hoekstra director) and the Chr. Male Choir "The Choraliers" (Gerry Numan director) at 8 p.m. in the Second CRC, **Brampton,** Ont.
Dec. 20	St. Thomas & District Male Choir and the St. Thomas Ladies Choir will have a combined Christmas concert in the 1st United Church, St. George St., **St. Thomas,** at 8 p.m.
Dec. 20	Christmas celebration with Adoramus-Maranatha Choir, at 7:30 p.m. in the CRC, **York,** Ont.
Dec. 23	Christmas candlelight service with the combined Adoramus-Maranatha choirs at the Mt. Hamilton CRC, 1411 Upper Wellington St., **Hamilton.** Director: Mr. John Hunse, organist: Miss Monica Admiral. Time: 8:00 p.m.
Dec. 23	Christmas celebration with Adoramus-Maranatha Choir at 8 p.m. in Mount Hamilton CRC, **Hamilton,** Ont.
Dec. 23	Christmas concert at 8 p.m. in the Willowdale United Church (Kenneth Ave.), **Willowdale,** Ont., by Leendert Kooij's O.C.M.A. with Andre Knevel at the organ.
Dec. 27	Annual sacred concert at 8 p.m. in Knox Presbyterian Church, Church St., **St. Catharines** (across from City Hall). With organist Christiaan Teeuwsen and "The Ambassadors."
Dec. 31	Annual New Year's Eve hymnsing at the Guelph Reformed Church, 79 Speedvale Ave., East, **Guelph,** with guest organist Jan Overduin of the Faculty of Music, Wilfrid Laurier University at 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 13 - Feb. 10	Extension Series 1988: "Planet for the Taking" presented by The King's College, at the **Calgary** Chr. School at 7:30 p.m. on Jan. 13, 27; Feb. 3 and 10.
Jan. 14-17	Couples treat at Fair Havens Conference Centre, **Beaverton,** Ont. For info. call (705) 426-7378.
Jan. 20	Youth in concert: Edmonton Youth Orchestra, The King's College Choir and U of A Concert Choir, directed by Michael Massey, at 8 p.m. at St. Joseph's Basilica, **Edmonton,** Alta.
Jan. 21 - Feb. 11	Extension Series 1988: "A Planet for the Taking" presented by The King's College; at the college, **Edmonton,** at 8 p.m. on Jan. 21, 28; Feb. 4 and 11.
Jan. 28 - Mar. 3	Dobson film series "Turn Your Heart Towards Home" in the East **Strathroy** CRC at 8 p.m. on Jan. 28, Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25 and Mar. 3.
Feb. 3-12	Series of presentations by Professor Dale Grotenhuis on the new Psalter Hymnal. Feb. 3: First CRC, **Sarnia,** Ont.; Feb. 4: First CRC, **London,** Ont.; Feb. 5: First CRC, **Drayton,** Ont.; Feb. 6: Auditorium, Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont.; Feb. 7: Trinity CRC, **St. Catharines,** Ont.; Feb. 8: Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby,** Ont.; Feb. 9: Rehoboth CRC, **Bowmanville,** Ont.; Feb. 10: Grace CRC, **Agincourt,** Ont.; Feb. 11: First CRC, **Barrie,** Ont.; Feb. 12: Second CRC, **Brampton,** Ont. All presentations begin at 8 p.m.
Feb. 12-14	Family retreat at Fair Havens Conference Centre, **Beaverton,** Ont. For info. call (705) 426-7378.
Feb. 22-23	RCBPA's fourth annual convention at Holiday Inn, **Burlington,** Ont. For info. call (416) 524-1203.
Feb. 13	Dedication of the famous REIL tracker-action pipe organ in the auditorium of Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont. The two-manual, 2000-pipe organ from Heerde, The Netherlands, will be played by virtuoso organist Christiaan Teeuwsen, Redeemer's new Assistant Professor of Music. Starts at 7:30 p.m.

Just Off the Press

Scheduled For Release During December 1987

A Great Gift-giving Idea

Tini Van Ameyde's

Onderweg ... Richting Eden

A collection of about 80 poems (in Dutch) written between 1954 and 1987 from a Christian immigrant's perspective.

Tini Van Ameyde, author and poet, has written many contributions for Calvinist Contact and other Christian journals. She lives in Edmonton, Alberta.

Publication price	$6.95	(U.S. residents deduct 25%; bookstore discounts available)
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Advertising Deadlines

Dated	Mailed	Two column ad deadline	Classified deadline
Fri.Dec.18	Tues.Dec.15	Wed.Dec.9-8:30a.m.	Thurs.Dec.10-8:30a.m.
Fri.Jan.1	Tues.Dec.22	Wed.Dec.16-8:30a.m.	Thurs.Dec.17-8:30a.m.
Fri.Jan.8	Tues.Jan.5	Tues.Dec.22-8:30a.m.	Wed.Dec.23-8:30a.m.

PLEASE NOTE: Deadlines for advertising for the Jan. 1 and 8 issue have been changed due to Christmas holidays. Please be sure to take note and get your ads in on time to avoid disappointment.

Dutch

Kerstfeest meditatie 1987

Jelle de Jong

"En zij gingen haastig en vonden Maria en Jozef en het Kind, liggende in de kribbe."

Herders behoren eigenlijk tot de armste mensen. We lezen van die arme herders, dat zij haastig gingen om het Kind te aanbidden. Ze verloren niet veel tijd met debatteren wie er gaan zou en wie op de schapen moest passen, niets daarvan! Het staat er duidelijk, dat ze met haast gingen. Stel u voor dat de herders alleen maar hadden geluisterd naar de engelen, dan was hun leven niets veranderd.

Zo zal het met ons kunnen gaan. Je kunt wel honderd Kerstfeesten vieren, zonder dat je bij het Kerst-feit terecht komt, dat is bij Jezus Christus, waar het om te doen is.

De herders hadden dat goed begrepen en zij haastten zich. Wij zien dit vaker in het evangelie — ook met Pasen gaan de vrouwen haastig heen; met Pinksteren komt de Heilige Geest haastig.

Zou het kunnen zijn dat wij, die de leeftijd van de sterken bereikt hebben, ons moeten realizeren dat we weinig tijd hebben? We zijn nog in het hier en nu, als de Here Jezus ons roept, mijn vrienden, dan is er misschien geen tijd meer om ons "huis" voor te bereiden. Nu is de tijd om Jezus' geboorte met grote blijdschap te vieren.

Toch zijn er juist met deze dagen mensen die bedroefd zijn. Meer en meer van ons, die dit nog kunnen lezen, zijn alleen achtergebleven.

In een bejaardentehuis ging iemand staan en zei: "Ik wil jullie iets vragen; nog maar enkele jaren geleden hadden wij nog ons eigen gezin. Kerstfeest was zo mooi; mijn vrouw had alles zo fijn en gezellig. Nu, als ik alleen op mijn kamer zit, al een paar jaar nu, ben ik echt in de put en hoe kom ik daar nu uit?"

Niemand had een antwoord. En het helpt niet als je tegen zo iemand zegt: "Hoor eens, het valt wel wat mee," want dat is niet waar! Wat is het antwoord? Jezus Christus, Hij alleen kan u troosten. Gods grote liefde was voor ons bewezen toen Hij zijn eigen Zoon gaf voor een wereld verloren in schuld.

Als we dat weten in ons hart, dan wordt het Kerstfeest — Kerstfeit. Wij mogen dat vieren met grote blijdschap, ondanks pijn, ondanks verdriet.

We moeten niet teveel stilstaan bij wat wij missen, maar we moeten onze zegeningen tellen. Tel ze één voor één. Vergelijk eens met onze ouders. Hebben wij het niet goed boven verdienste? Ver daarboven staat, dat wij het Kindje in de kribbe, dat lang geleden op aarde kwam, mogen kennen als onze Heer en Heiland.

Er waren herders. Zo beginnen sprookjes. Maar de herders in Ephrata's velden waren echt. Ze zijn lang geleden gestorven. Eén is er nog — de Goede Herder. Wie de herders zoekt, zoekt tevergeefs, maar wie Jezus zoekt, die vindt.

Vrienden, laten wij haast maken om het Kind te zoeken.

Jelle de Jong is een ouderling in de Ebenezer Reformed Church in Fruitland, Ontario.

Moe van het leven

Arie Dof

De zoete rust van ons pensioen-gerechtigd bestaan werd verstoord door Fred Van Dregt, de concierge en officiële Manus-van-alles van ons christelijk bejaardenhuis. Hij wou graag een paar dagen met vakantie om, met zijn vrouw, zijn kinderen te bezoeken; en of Arie nu wel voor hem wilde waarnemen.

En zo vond ik mij op een goede morgen hoog verheven op een ladder staan in de hal van het gebouw, waarin zoveel van onze vrienden en bekenden hun gouden jaren doorbrengen. Vanaf mijn hoge positie keek ik neer op de voorbijgangers, waarvan sommigen bleven staan om eens goed te zien, hoe Arie Dof uitgebrande lampen verwijderde en er nieuwe voor in de plaats schroefde. Een hoogst interessante bezigheid, die naar wens verliep.

Terwijl ik tevreden de trap afdaalde, kwam eensklaps geluidloos, maar met aanzienlijke snelheid, een electrische rolstoel op ons af, slecht bestuurd door de trotse eigenaar Jan te Heuvel.

"Ha, die Arie!" riep Jan vriendelijk en stak vrolijk zijn hand op. Dit werd hem noodlottig, want hij vergat te sturen. De rolstoel kwam regelrecht op de trap af, de omstanders stoven weg, zo snel als hun oude benen hen konden dragen, en ik nam een geweldige sprong. Net op tijd, want de stoel reed tegen de trap aan en de trap kantelde.

Groot was de verontwaardiging van de omstanders, en ik voelde mij ook niet vrij van zeer negatieve gedachten over die rolstoel-maniac Jan te Heuvel. Deze was echter reeds doorgereden en buiten bereik van de boze uitroepen. Die vent had niet eens gestopt! Een duidelijk geval van "hit-and-run!"

Nadat ieder zijn verontwaardiging had geuit zette ik de trap overeind, en begaf ik me naar nummer 136, de flat van Jan.

Deze zat me al op te wachten, nog steeds in zijn gevaarlijke rolstoel. "Ach, Arie," sprak hij aandoenlijk, "wat spijt me dat nou! Ik vergat te sturen, toen ik jou zag en toen ik op die trap afvloog, wist ik niet meer hoe ik moest remmen. Heb je je erg bezeerd?"

Ziende, dat zijn berouw regelrecht uit zijn hart kwam, sprak ik verzoenende woorden en waarschuwde hem, om voortaan uit te kijken en niet meer zo hard over de gangen te rijden, hetgeen hij grif beloofde.

"Nu je hier toch bent, Arie, en omdat je ouderling voor de 65-plussers bent, zou je misschien wel eens even bij mijn buurman Gerrit Taling willen kijken? Hij komt de laatste tijd haast niet meer van zijn kamer. De fut is er helemaal uit, en hij zit de hele dag voor zich uit te staren. Hij is helemaal niet goed."

En zo kwam ik bij Taling terecht. Dat hij niet vol met energie en activiteiten zat, viel te begrijpen op zijn leeftijd: hij was pas 87 geworden! Maar wat ik zag, toen ik zijn kamer binnenkwam, vulde me met deernis: een oude man, ineengekrompen in een leuningstoel, met lege blik voor zich uit starende. Het duurde even, voordat hij me herkende. Ongenodigd ging ik er maar bij zitten.

"Hoe gaat het tegenwoordig, Gerrit? Ik geloof, niet zo best, hè?" Met doffe blik keek hij in mijn richting en schudde zijn grijze hoofd. Hij wilde er maar liever niet over praten. Het hielp allemaal toch niets. Dat zei hij tegen me met een bijna fluisterende stem.

Ik moedigde hem aan, om te vertellen, wat zijn leven zo vreugdeloos maakte, en eindelijk hief hij zijn klaagzang aan: Hij was zo eenzaam en zo moe, dat het met geen pen te beschrijven was. De dokters glimlachten altijd, wanneer ze hem onderzochten, omdat zijn hart en zijn hele gestel nog zo sterk was, en gaven het advies, om veel naar buiten te gaan en met de andere bewoners te praten. Maar hij kon het niet meer. Zijn vrouw was al veertien jaar geleden overleden en de kinderen en kleinkinderen kwamen steeds minder op bezoek. Met een schrale glimlach zei Gerrit, dat hij dat ook wel begrijpen kon, want hij was geen aangenaam gezelschap meer.

"Je bent moe van het leven," merkte ik op. Ja, knikte Gerrit en er kwamen tranen in zijn ogen.

Ik heb geprobeerd hem te troosten door hem naar Jezus te wijzen, die ons heeft beloofd, dat Hij ons nimmer zal begeven, noch verlaten. Ik heb hem gewezen op het schone vooruitzicht voor Gods kinderen.

Gerrits reaktie: "Ach, Arie, ik weet dat allemaal wel, maar het helpt me zo weinig. Het is vaak zo donker."

Wie op zo'n moment ongeloof constateert, is een slecht vertrooster, en praat de broeder in de schaduw nog dieper de duisternis in.

Ik heb mijn handen op zijn handen gelegd en met hem gebeden. Dat wilde hij wel. Toen ik wegging, hield hij nog een ogenblik mijn handen vast, en zei: "Arie, wat ik graag wil, kan geen mens me geven. Ik zou zo graag net als Henoch en Elia en de Here Jezus ten Hemel willen varen, zo maar weg willen zijn, en bij de Here wezen." Zijn handen beefden en zijn ogen schreiden. "Wie weet, hoe gauw je aan de beurt bent, Gerrit."

Bij de deur beloofde ik, dat ik spoedig zou terugkomen, tezamen met het beste gezelschap ter wereld, namelijk mijn vrouw Katrien. Maar Gerrit Taling reageerde niet meer. Hij zat alweer te staren, en te wachten ....

Thuis gekomen vertelde ik Katrien, wat ik had beleefd. Diep meedogend schudde ze haar hoofd, toen ik vertelde van de eenzaamheid en de depressie van Gerrit Taling.

"Weet je wat ze moesten doen?" zei die wijze Katrien, "ze moesten niet alleen kinderen, maar ook eenzame oude mensen adopteren op zo'n manier dat men zich over die eenzamen ontfermde, ze geregeld bezocht, ze meer uitnam en andere leuke dingen voor ze deed."

"Als je het zo goed weet, waarom doe je het dan niet?" vroeg ik uitdagend. Katrien stond op en verzocht mij ook op te staan. Ze kondigde aan, dat dit een plechtig moment was. "Herhaal, wat ik zeg en beloof plechtig: Hierbij verklaren Katrien en Arie Dof, dat ze Gerrit Taling adopteren en hun best zullen doen, om zijn eenzaamheid te verzachten."

We hebben het beiden beloofd en maken dit nu aan het geachte publiek bekend, omdat er vele oude eenzamen zijn, die op adoptie wachten.

Arie Dof woont ergens in Canada. Waar precies weet niemand.

Persoverzicht

Carl D. Tuyl

Er was weer een vergadering van de tien provinciale premiers met Monsieur Mulroney als gastheer en voorzitter. Deze vergaderingen worden gehouden in het kader van de nieuwe en verbeterde relaties tussen Ottawa en de provincies. Maar Monsieur Mulroney liet wel even weten dat als puntje bij paaltje komt hij toch wel de baas is. "Je kunt nu eenmaal niet regeren met kommissies" zei onze prime minister. Hetgeen mij deed herinneren aan het gezegde van een hier in Canada bekende dominee: "Als de Israëlieten bij de Rode Zee een kommissie hadden benoemd zouden ze nu nog aan 't strand staan."

De Tarievenonderhandelingen met de U.S. waren natuurlijk het voornaamste punt van de agenda en er werden heel wat steken onder water gegeven. Ontario's premier Peterson, samen met Pawley van Manitoba en Ghiz van P.E.I. blijven de tegenstanders. Ontario is tegen het eventuele verdrag, omdat de welvaart van deze provincie hoofdzakelijk afhankelijk is van Amerikaanse filiaalbedrijven die zich daar gevestigd hebben en die onder de termen van het verdrag in veel gevallen overbodig zullen worden, en zeer zeker niet met hun eigen hoofdfabrieken zullen gaan konkurreren. Premier Peterson en anderen in Ontario geven dat natuurlijk liever een vaderlands tintje, maar dat is maar room op de koffie. Waar 't om gaat zijn de centen in de pot. Premier Devine wreef dat even onder Ontario's neus toen hij vroeg of de goed betaalde werkers in de automobielindustrie in Ontario echt bezorgd waren over verlies van nationale soevereiniteit. In ieder geval is de stand nog 7-3. Zeven vóór, drie teuge.

Monsieur Mulroney, nog briesend van woede over het feit dat de Eerste Kamer de zogenaamde medicijnenwet wist te vertragen, polste zijn provinciale collega's over mogelijkheden om de onafhankelijkheid van dat regeringslichaam te beperken. Monsieur Mulroney knijpt 'm hevig dat de Kamer ook zijn tarievenovereenkomst een hak zal zetten. De premiers bedankten beleefd om aan de revanche deel te nemen.

★★★★

Het grondpersoneel van onze nationale luchtvaartmaatschappij ging in staking voor onder andere betere pensioenvoorzieningen. We zullen ze voorlopig niet meer zien vliegen. Ik bedoel die vliegtuigen met de Maple Leaf op de staart.

★★★★

Onze binnenlandse veiligheidsdienst bleek nogal erg ambitieus te zijn. Mensen die rooie zakdoeken gebruikten gingen meteen op de lijst van verdachten, en ook voor het deelnemen aan demonstraties tegen muggenvergif bleek men onder verdenking te komen. Het bleek dat de dienst een archief had samengesteld dat zich bijna uitstrekte van zee tot zee. Tè ijverig vond men in Ottawa waar zoveel ijver toch al erg opvalt, en de hele dienst gaat nu gedwongen in de Vut.

★★★★

Gevolgen van Finance Minister Wilson's belastingherzieningen betekenen volgens wel ingelichte bronnen een verhoging in grondbelasting, omdat stedelijke besturen verkoopbelasting op hun diensten zouden moeten gaan heffen.

★★★★

De Kerstlichtjes werden in Ottawa ontstoken, hetgeen betekent dat al de politieke heren en dames nu, als u dit leest, op vakantie gaan.

★★★★

Haiti was het toneel van verschrikking toen loslopende moordenaars de kiezers met voorbedachte rade onder vuur namen. De regerende legerbonzen staken geen vinger uit in hulpverlening.

In Polen stemde de bevolking tegen regeringsvoorstellen voor ekonomische herzieningen. Die herzieningen hielden onder andere astronomische prijsverhogingen in. Onze Minister voor Transportzaken, die jaren geleden een twee-en-een-half cent per liter prijsverhoging van benzine voorstelde, had Generaal Jaruzelski wel kunnen vertellen hoe het af zou lopen.

★★★★

President Reagan, die nog net zoveel politieke macht heeft als een ontklauwde kat in een muizennest, gaat praten met Gorbachev die ook al een beetje voorzichtigjes aan moet doen, omdat er in het Kremlin heel wat van de oude garde zijn, die al die ontwikkelingen in de richting van meer ekonomische en politieke vrijheid met grote argwaan gade slaan. Het is te hopen dat de beide heren de goede verstandhouding kunnen bewaren.

★★★★

De familie van de ontvoerde Gerrit Jan Hein in Nederland vroeg om een levensteken voordat er geld en diamanten zouden worden overhandigd. In antwoord stuurden de ontvoerders een stuk van mijnheer Heins pink.

★★★★

De Franse regering onderhandelde met ontvoerders in Beiroet, en twee gijzelaars werden in vrijheid gesteld. In ruil daarvoor liet de Franse regering een Iraanse verdachte los. Er was kritiek in de Franse pers over de koele pragmatiek in deze onderhandelingen en het prijsgeven van een principiële houding tegenover geweld van terroristen. De Franse regering betaalde ook $330 miljoen af aan een lening die jaren her gesloten werd met de voormalige Shah van Iran.

★★★★

Italiaanse diplomaten over de hele wereld hielden een 24 uur staking ... in jacquet natuurlijk, en niets zo cru als plakkaten. Gewoon thuisblijven en lekker espresso drinken bij moeder de vrouw. Er werden, volgens de heren in de diplomatieke dienst, teveel ongeschoolde ambtenaren in buitenlandse posten benoemd. Het klinkt ons Canadezen bekend in de oren. Ik meen gehoord te hebben dat een zekere prime-minister daar ook een handje van heeft.

★★★★

Henry Kissinger, Nixons Minister voor Buitenlandse Zaken, hoeft nog niet naar de bijstand. Hij is juist benoemd tot de Raad van Direkteuren in een groot Canadees zakenconcern.

★★★★

Ik speur ijverig voor mijn lezers in Nederlandse bladen naar moppen die niet beschimmeld van ouderdom zijn als kaas die te lang in de kast heeft gelegen. Die speurtocht is vaak tevergeefs maar zo af en toe is er toch wel eens iets leuks.

Twee vermeld ik hier uit een recente bloemlezing. De meester vroeg Jantje: "Jantje hoe heet een vrouwtjesschaap?" Jantje: "Dat weet ik niet, meester." Meester: "Nou Jantje, dat is een ooi, maar weet jij dan soms hoe een mannetjes-schaap heet?" Jantje: "Ja meester, dat is dan natuurlijk een ooievaar!"

Dezelfde Jantje vroeg 's avonds aan zijn moeder waar de kindertjes vandaan komen. Moeder (nogal verlegen): "Uit de rooie kool, Jantje." Jantje: "Nou dan kunnen we onze lol wel op want er staan 'r nog een stuk of tachtig in de tuin, dat zal me effe een heibel worden hier!"

Carl Tuyl is predikant van de First Christian Reformed Church in Kingston, Ontario.

Islamieten mogen vijf minuten tot gebed oproepen

AMSTERDAM — De islamitische gebedsoproepers, muezzins, mogen in Amsterdam voortaan elke vrijdag gedurende vijf minuten de tienduizend moslims in de stad oproepen tot gebed.

De Amsterdamse gemeenteraad heeft in principe besloten aan moskeeën, als daarom wordt verzocht, een vergunning te geven voor de wekelijkse oproep. Behalve de dag en de tijdsduur, is bepaald dat het geluid niet boven een bepaald aantal decibels (een bepaalde hoeveelheid geluid) mag uitkomen en dat de buurtbewoners te voren op de hoogte worden gesteld.

De gemeente heeft de stadsdeelraden, die zélf mogen beslissen of ze toestemming geven voor de gebedsoproepen in hun deel van de stad, nog niet officieel van dit besluit op de hoogte gesteld.

Volgens een woordvoerder van de gemeente is er tot nu toe nog maar één aanvraag binnengekomen, namelijk uit Amsterdam-Bijlmermeer, maar hij verwacht meer verzoeken.

De stad telt veertig moskeeën. De buurt zal daarover worden ingelicht. Inspraak wordt niet gegeven, "omdat het een principiële zaak betreft die zich niet voor inspraak leent. Klokken worden óók geluid en geluidswagens mogen ook door een wijk rijden zonder toestemming van de bewoners," aldus de woordvoerder.

Als er klachten komen, zullen die door de politie worden getoetst aan de normen die zijn gesteld. Vorig jaar kwamen er klachten van omwonenden, maar toen was er nog niets over zaken als tijd en geluid geregeld, zo laat hij nog weten.

Volgens een woordvoerder van de stadsdeelraad Amsterdam-noord hebben de drie moskeeën daar nog geen verzoek ingediend om te mogen oproepen tot gebed. Hoe de buurtbewoners zullen reageren op eventuele toestemming is nog de vraag, maar de moskeeën zelf worden goed geaccepteerd in Amsterdam-noord, meent hij.

Wel zal de stadsdeelraad in ieder geval extra veel sociaal-culturele voorlichting geven over Islamieten in Nederland als de verzoeken worden toegestaan. Amsterdam-noord telt ongeveer 1.100 Turkse en 1.400 Marokkaanse moslims, in andere delen van de stad zijn deze aantallen hoger.

Overgenomen uit: Trouw.

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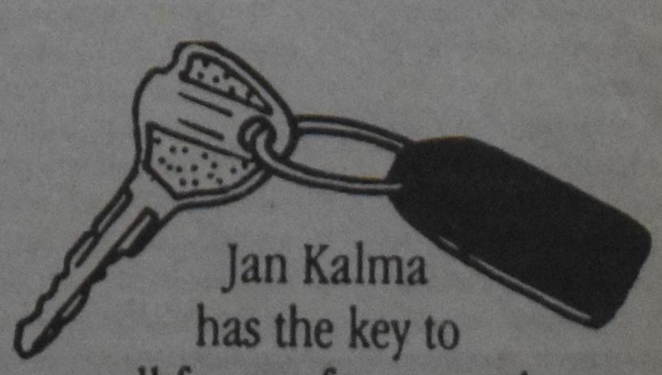

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Books/Meditation

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Church in the world

The Christian presence ... or absence

***The Steeple's Shadow* by David Lyon. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987. Paperback, 165 pages. $14.25. Reviewed by Gerald Vandezande, Public Affairs Director of Citizens for Public Justice, and author of *Christians in the Crisis: Toward Responsible Citizenship*.**

This fine book deals with the myths and realities of secularization from a Christian perspective on sociology. It has helped me to understand more clearly our common concerns as well as some of our differences. It may also help to stimulate constructive dialogue and contribute to a more united, integral witness.

I will not venture an in-depth evaluation of the author's careful analysis of sociological thought. I urge that such appraisal be done at Christian colleges and at ministers', elders' and deacons' conferences. This is part of their prophetic-pastoral task to help Christians interact more meaningfully with their contemporaries and to clarify the churches' role in a world which now does not often regard their message as all that helpful to the resolution of its problems.

Better insight

I will simply refer to a few of the many sections in Lyon's book which have given me a better insight into some of the challenges and dilemmas we face in our attempts at Christian discipleship. I hope that many will make it a point to read the entire book. You will not regret it!

Lyon begins his introduction with two provocative paragraphs:

Over the past two hundred years, the steeple's shadow has shrunk drastically. The social influence of organized Christianity has waned. Once a respected and central pillar of society, the Church has been demoted from prominence, and relegated to the social fringes. Frequently the steeple casts no shadow at all, itself overshadowed by the symbolic structures dominating modern cities: the soaring skyscrapers from which commerce, manufacturing, communications, policing and government are administered.

People have learned to look to other sources of insight and knowledge than "revelation" in order to give meaning and direction to life. No longer under the sheltering steeple, hope is sought in the human capacity to cope. Forecasting, planning and managing, rather than prayer, reliance on God and diligent stewardship are the hallmarks of the secular society. Cost/benefit analysis, getting a market share, efficiency and self-interest are valued more than the love of neighbour or care of creation. Life itself may be "created" in a test-tube, and "artificial intelligence" produced microelectronically. No wonder God is rendered redundant.

This vivid description of the current state of affairs causes Lyon to ask the following key questions about the future of the churches and religion in modern society:

Will the steeple's shadow continue to contract as science sheds further light and as the power of Christendom is replaced by the secular state? Is the social and cultural influence of the churches in irreversible decline? Will religion itself disappear with the development of a high-tech society?

Lyon asserts that these issues and others confront us in the term "secularization." It makes me think hard, particularly when he adds, "The actual claims and demands of the church's founder, Jesus Christ, have fallen on hard times. The loss of the church's social position has resulted in a loss of nerve among today's Christians."

Waning influence

I wonder: is this what is happening to us? Are we losing courage simply because the churches are not as influential as they used to be? Or is something else — something deeper — troubling us?

I reflect briefly on Lyon's presentation of the realities of secularization and then read on about the myths. One of them is that our "rationalized" society supposedly has no room for any religion, that — secularization is "an irresistible social force, moving steadily forward wherever modernity has found a foothold, and having more-or-less the same effects in all contexts."

I realize that many people, including Christians, surrender to this notion. Especially when, as Lyon puts it, "the scope of Christian claims on the whole spectrum of life is shrivelled as soon as a relative autonomy is granted to politics, economics or technology. Once Christians succumb to the view that such spheres should operate only according to their own internal criteria, they have, in fact, surrendered to secularity themselves."

I respond intuitively: precisely because Christ has *all* authority in heaven and on earth and promises to be with us *always*, to the very end of the age, do we really need to fear secularization? Should we not face it in faith by following the Way, the Truth and the Life? Should we not use the current crisis as an opportunity to exercise greater Christian faithfulness? Lyon challenges us to transcend the malaise by plumbing the depths of the scriptures:

Without contributing to the mood of cultural pessimism, the churches could draw on the rich resources of a text such as Ecclesiastes, which puts its proverbial finger on the futility of all "autonomous" schemes for self-redemption. In the same spirit, the chance is here for the churches to speak into current crises with the essential Christian gospel of forgiveness through Christ and hope in the act of "remembering your Creator."

I ask myself: if David Lyon can live, write and teach out of this biblical conviction in his native England, where secularization reportedly has made deeper inroads than in Canada, then we and our churches should certainly take his challenge to heart. We should encourage each other to make better use of the freedom God gives us every day, be stronger partners in the ministry of reconciliation, and make a more concerted attempt to communicate and demonstrate God's renewing power and spirit in our daily life.

Reverse the trend

Such personal, communal and institutional commitment and action could not only delay secularization but also reduce its impact. Can we perhaps even try to reverse the current trend? History is full of examples of people who acted in faith (Christian or otherwise) and made a difference that often was decisive for the direction of history. Think of John Calvin, Martin Luther and William Wilberforce, of Abraham Kuyper, Martin Luther King and Tommy Douglas, of Jeanne d'Arc, Harriet Tubman and Mother Theresa, of Billy Graham and Allan Boesak.

In today's world, we Christians don't always communicate our convictions as dynamically as we could, and non-Christians often take the lead because they are certain of their goals. We and our churches are not yet the positive presence we can be if we live out of the faith-knowledge that with God all things are possible.

What would happen if we and our churches changed our ways, thought more biblically and acted more faithfully? What would happen in our homes and communities, at work and in economics, in education and politics? Could we meet the challenge that Lyon presents: "find a passage through the world which adapts faith to time and place without sacrificing its fundamental integrity?"

Each of us, and all of us together, must struggle with these and other questions. Our answers will show what kind of people and churches we are or want to be. One of Lyon's closing paragraphs lingers in my heart:

Although no one can predict whether any aspects of a Christian outlook will be able to penetrate the centres of "public" life, from a sociological viewpoint the fact that other — sometimes less desirable — "counter-cultural" motifs have found a foothold there suggests that opportunities may be available. Christian faithfulness at any rate demands that some attempt be made. Our forebears, exiled in Babylon, also faced formidable obstacles in seeking "peace and prosperity" in a city whose name was a byword for hostility to YHWH.

I hope and pray that our response to the gospel will increasingly be worthy of the name and that our ongoing discussion will soon lead to a more unified Christian presence in God's good creation.

Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Consuming passion

"They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them." **(Acts 2:3)**

John Wesley once tried to explain to a questioner why the crowds surrounded him when he preached. He said, "God has set me on fire and people come to watch me burn!"

Something of the sort has been true ever since the first Pentecost Sunday when a sign of the Holy Spirit's presence was the consuming fire that distributed itself among the disciples. Years earlier, when John the Baptizer preached his hell-fire and damnation sermons on the banks of the Jordan River, he announced this day. He said to the gathering masses, "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (Matthew 3:11)

Presence

The symbolism of fire was particularly fitting for this occasion. God met his Old Testament servant Moses in the burning bush in the wilderness. He led his people Israel by means of a fiery cloud. And when He took up residence with them, it was heaven's *shekinah* glory-light that enveloped the tabernacle. Fire had long proclaimed the living presence of God on earth.

Unity

But the peculiar actions of this particular flame, as recorded by Luke, also declared another important theological message. The fire was one, yet it divided itself into identical replicas above each individual in the place. The God whose unique fiery presence had stood over his tabernacle home, now moved into the apartment complex of the church. His single will invaded each room, each heart, and joined it with the others through a vast network of consuming love.

Passion

As the refining fires of the Spirit washed them clean with a baptism of the soul, matter was turned to energy. Poets have long been captured by the images of this moment:

"Kindle a flame of heavenly love, and feed the pure desire." (Cotterill)

"Breathe on me, breath of God, till I am wholly thine, till all this earthly part of me glows with thy fire divine!" (Hatch)

"Teach to love thee as thine angels love / one holy passion filling all my frame / The baptism of the heaven-descended dove / my heart an altar and thy love the flame!" (Croly)

When the Apostle Paul wrote to young Pastor Timothy, he gave a striking word of encouragement: "Fan into flame the gift of God which is in you!" (II Tim. 1:6) Earlier he had warned a particular congregation: "Do not put out the Spirit's fire!" (I Thess. 5:19) At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit got the church "fired up!" Are you still burning?

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor of First Christian Reformed Church, London, Ontario.